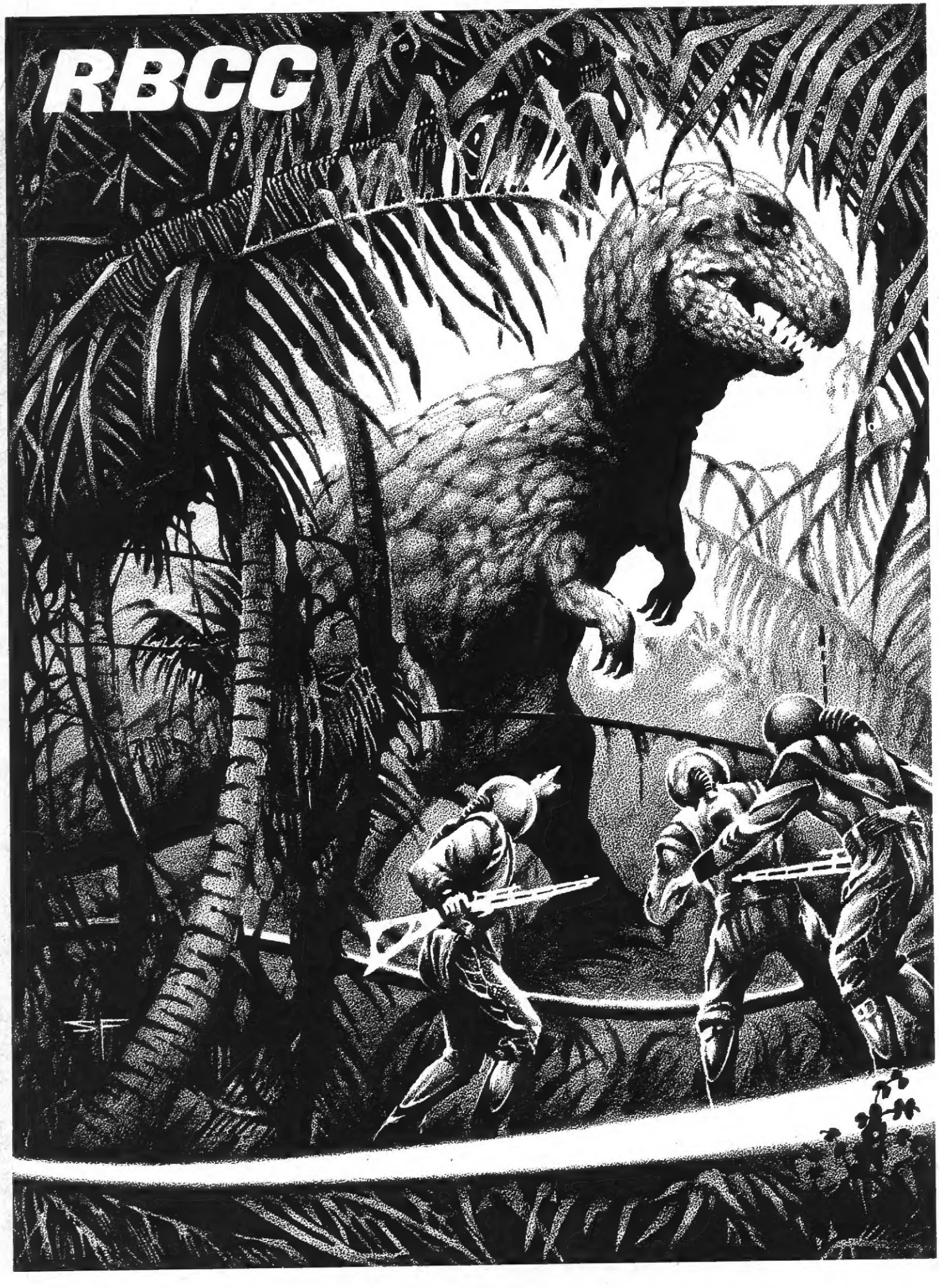
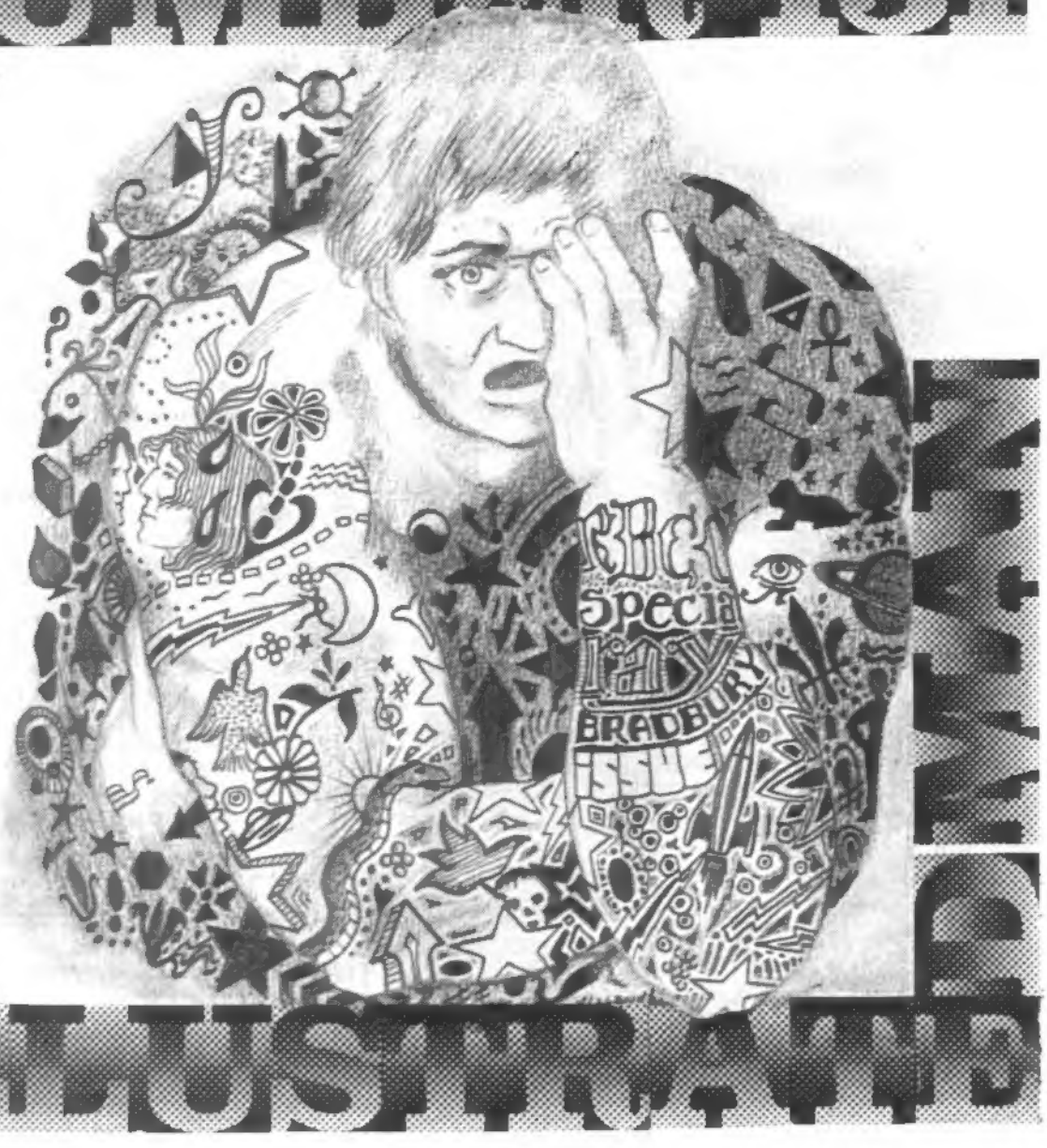

RBCC

THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR

NUMBER #131

THOMAS ILLUSTRATED MAN



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IMPORTANT!

THE ADVERTISING AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR THE ROCKET'S BLAST - COMICOLLECTOR

OCTOBER 1976

FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENTS: $18.00 per page - These ads occupy a full page when printed in the RB&CC. They may be submitted on sheets from 8 1/2 x 11 to 15 x 20, bearing in mind that it will be reduced down to 8 1/2 x 11.

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CIRCULATION: 1800 PER ISSUE

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

THIRD CLASS: 5 issues $6.50, 10 for $12.00, 15 for $14.50, 20 for $19.00
FIRST CLASS: 5 issues $8.50, 10 for $16.00, 15 for $20.00, 20 for $26.00
DOUBLE ABOVE RATES FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS OUTSIDE OF NORTH AMERICA.
SINGLE COPY: Third Class-$1.50, First Class-$2.25

IMPORTANT NOTE: If your RB&CC has the word EXPIRED on the label when it arrives, it means that your subscription has ended and should be renewed immediately to avoid missing an issue. When renewing subscriptions, be sure to state the issue number of the last issue you received.

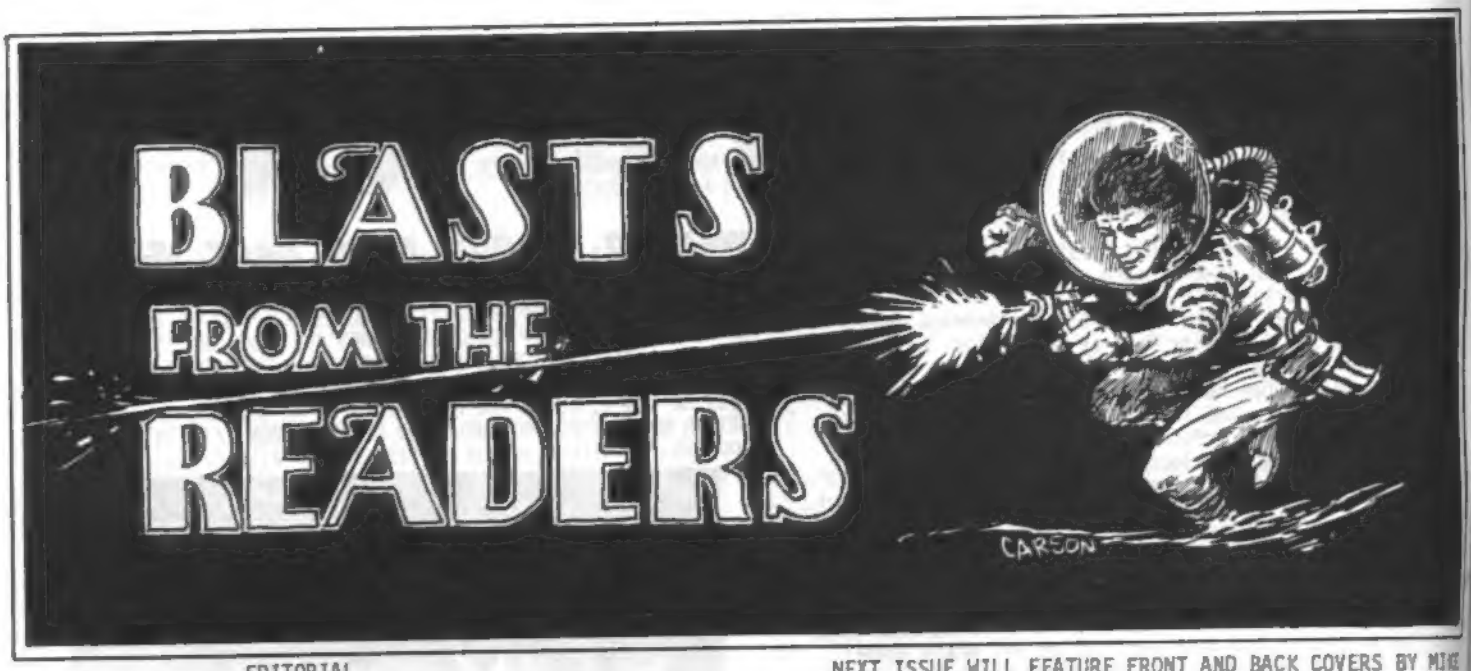
AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES OF THE RB&CC ARE LISTED BELOW. THEY ARE $1.75 EACH FROM THE S.F.C.A.

#'s 57, 58, 106, 107, 117, 120, 121, 123,
124, 125, 127, 129, 130

THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR is published by THE S.F.C.A., 1445 N.W. 180th TERR., Miami, Florida 33169. EDITOR EMERITUS: GORDON B. LOVE, EDITOR & PUBLISHER: JAMES VAN HISE
STAFF ARTISTS: Brad Epstein, Ralph Fowler, Mike McKenney, Don Rosa, Bob Susor and Mike Zeck.
Contributions are always welcomed, but if you want it returned be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

THE ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE RBCC ARE: NOV. 26
JAN. 7

THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR "SPECIAL RAY BRADBURY ISSUE" IS PUBLISHED BY THE AUTUMN PEOPLE:
EDITOR & PUBLISHER--JAMES VAN HISE, ASSISTANT EDITOR--DELLA HAWKS, INSPIRATION--RAY BRADBURY
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS IN THE RAY BRADBURY SECTION--STEVE FABIAN, TOM SUTTON, MIKE ZECK,
RON WILBER, BRAD EPSTEIN, ALEX KOEHN, MIKE McKENNEY, DON ROSA AND INGRID NEILSON.
--This issue is dedicated with deepest affection and admiration to Ray Bradbury.



EDITORIAL

WELCOME TO THE SPECIAL RAY BRADBURY ISSUE OF THE RBCC. ALTHOUGH THIS ISSUE STILL HAS MANY OF THE REGULAR FEATURES, AS WELL AS SOME NEW ONES, THERE ARE STILL THIRTY PAGES DEVOTED TO BRADBURY RELATED MATERIAL (WHICH IS ONLY TWO PAGES LESS OF SPECIAL MATERIAL THAN WAS IN THE BODE' ISSUE, #121, AND THAT ONE HAD FAR FEWER REGULAR FEATURES).

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS MUST BE GIVEN FIRST TO THE DIVINE LIGHT MISSION FOR PERMISSION TO REPRINT THE TWO PAGE BRADBURY INTERVIEW AND THE ACCOMPANYING ILLUSTRATION FROM THE DECEMBER 1975 ISSUE OF AND IT IS DIVINE MAGAZINE AND TO MIKE McKENNEY FOR COMING ACROSS THAT ISSUE AND POINTING IT OUT TO ME. I FELT IT WAS A GOOD ITEM TO REPRINT FOR ALTHOUGH IT'S BRIEF IT IS GOOD AND I DOUBT THAT MANY OF YOU OUT THERE WOULD HAVE EVEN KNOWN OF IT OTHERWISE. THANKS ALSO TO DAVE CARSON FOR SENDING ME THE L.A. TIMES ARTICLE BY BRADBURY WHICH I'VE RETYPED AND REPRINTED HEREIN.

NOT EVERYONE WAS SO CO-OPERATIVE, THOUGH. I CONTACTED TV GUIDE FOR PERMISSION TO REPRINT AN ARTICLE WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN THEIR MAY 3, 1969 ISSUE CONCERNING THE SUNSWEET COMMERCIAL RAY STARRED IN. IT EVEN INCLUDED PHOTOS FROM IT. BUT TV GUIDE VERY PROMPTLY REFUSED PERMISSION DUE TO IT BEING "NOT IN (THEIR) BEST INTERESTS", WHATEVER THAT MEANS.

I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO ALSO HAVE RUN A TRANSCRIPTION OF "THE TOMORROW SHOW" WHICH BRADBURY WAS ON TWO YEARS AGO BUT I KNEW FROM PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE THEY WOULDN'T GRANT PERMISSION. I ONCE WROTE THEM ABOUT OBTAINING A COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT OF IT (AS NBC CENSORED IT ON THE AIR) BUT THEY SAID THEIR LEGAL DEPARTMENT WOULDN'T ALLOW IT. SO ALTHOUGH I COULD HAVE JUST GONE AHEAD A PUBLISHED A TRANSCRIPT ANYWAY WITHOUT BOTHERING WITH THINGS LIKE A LEGAL OKAY (SUCH AS SOME FANZINES DO, MUCH TO THEIR PERIL) I DIDN'T THINK THAT IT WOULD BE A VERY WISE IDEA.

THE LOGO ON "THE NOVA S.F. REVIEW" COLUMN IS BY MIKE McKENNEY.

ALTHOUGH THE "INFORMATION CENTER" WAS PROMISED TO START UP AGAIN THIS ISSUE, THERE JUST WASN'T ROOM ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE, SO IT WILL RETURN NEXT ISSUE AND THE FIRST NEW INSTALLMENT WILL HAVE SUCH THINGS AS A KALUTA INDEX, A SHADOW PULP INDEX, AND A FIRST YEAR INDEX TO THE "SECRET AGENT" TV SHOW, PLUS LOTS MORE.

THERE IS ALSO NO ROOM FOR THE LETTER COLUMN THIS TIME.

LEST YOU THINK THE REPORT IN "KEYHOLE" ABOUT CHARLTON COMICS IS OLD NEWS AND HAS CHANGED, I HAD MIKE ZECK CHECK WITH CHARLTON EDITOR GEORGE WILDMAN, AND DESPITE PUBLISHED CLAIMS THAT CHARLTON WILL STILL CONTINUE, WILDMAN SAID THAT CHARLTON "ISN'T PUBLISHING A PAGE AND WON'T FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS...IF THEN". ALL THAT'S COMING FROM CHARLTON NOW ARE THE BOOKS THAT WERE ALREADY PRINTED WHEN THEY SUSPENDED MAJOR OPERATIONS. THE ONLY PERSON WORKING FOR WILDMAN NOW IS HIS SECRETARY.

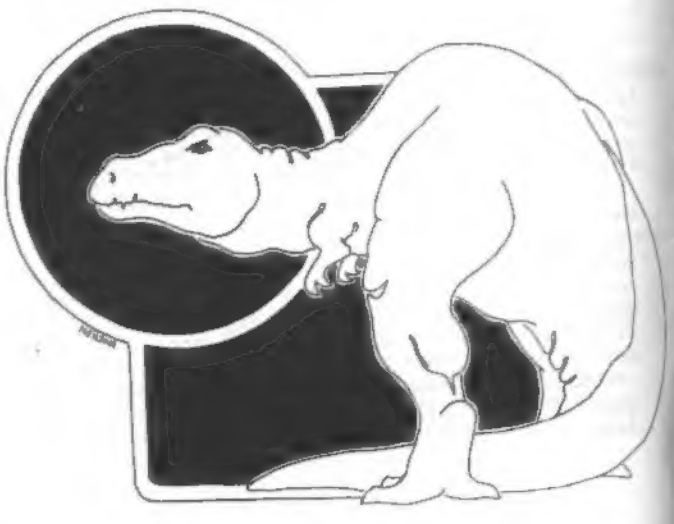
NEXT ISSUE WILL FEATURE FRONT AND BACK COVERS BY MIKE ZECK OF ADAM STRANGE TO ACCOMPANY A FEATURE ARTICLE I'M DOING ON THE CHARACTER. MIKE HAS ALSO DONE SOME OTHER RBCC COVERS WHICH WILL BE APPEARING OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS INCLUDING COVERS OF THOR, THE NEWER MARVEL VERSION OF THE DESTROYER, AND THE DITKO VERSION OF THE BLUE BEETLE. NEXT ISSUE WILL ALSO HAVE A NEW "FILMS FANTASTIQUE" ON "SILENT RUNNING" WITH SPECIAL ACCOMPANYING ART BY RALPH FOWLER. I ALSO PLAN TO BEGIN MY NEW "ARTIST PROFILE" FEATURE NEXT ISSUE WHICH WILL COVER, ONE AT A TIME, THE MANY REGULAR ARTISTS DOING WORK FOR THE RBCC.

IN KEEPING IN LINE WITH MY PLANS FOR BIGGER AND BETTER THINGS FOR THE RBCC, ISSUE #133 WILL HAVE A FULL COLOR COVER PAINTING DONE BY FRANK BRUNNER! THIS IS A NEW PIECE RECENTLY COMPLETED BY HIM AND WHICH HE IS ALLOWING ME TO PUBLISH FIRST ON THE RBCC. THE ORIGINAL WILL ALSO BE UP FOR SALE FROM HIM AT THAT TIME. IT IS A STUNNING PIECE OF WORK AND WOULD HAVE GRACED THE COVER OF A MAGAZINE SUCH AS UNKNOWN WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION WERE IT STILL BEING PUBLISHED.

AT THIS TIME I'D LIKE TO ISSUE A WARNING & REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE "ACCENT BOOK SHOP", 211 NORTH LIME, LEXINGTON, KY. 40507. THEY HAD BEEN REGULAR DEALERS OF THE RBCC UNTIL AFTER ORDERING #128 THEIR $15.00 CHECK BOUNCED. THEY HAVE IGNORED ALL INQUIRIES I'VE SENT THEM AND HAVE NOT MADE GOOD ON THE CHECK. I SUGGEST CAUTION IN DEALING WITH THEM, IF THEY'RE STILL AROUND. IT IS UNFORTUNATE WHEN PEOPLE VICTIMIZE FANDOM LIKE THIS.

* * * * *

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK RAY BRADBURY JUST FOR BEING RAY BRADBURY.



TIME IN THY FLIGHT

ORIGINAL STORY BY RAY BRADBURY

ADAPTION AND ART BY RON WILBER·'76

A WIND BLEW THE LONG YEARS PAST THEIR HOT FACES, AND THE TIME MACHINE STOPPED.

IT WAS THE SPRING OF THE YEAR IN A LITTLE ILLINOIS TOWN.

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY - EIGHT.

THE GIRL AND THE TWO BOYS WORE CRISP KHAKI UNIFORMS. THEY HAD IDENTICAL HAIRCUTS, WRISTWATCHES, SHOES, AND COLORING OF HAIR, EYES, TEETH, AND SKIN, THOUGH THEY WERE NOT RELATED.

REMEMBER, YOU'RE HERE TO OBSERVE THE BEHAVIOR OF THESE ANCIENT PEOPLE. BE INQUISITIVE, BE INTELLIGENT, OBSERVE.

FAR DOWN THE STREET A SMALL BOY CAME RUNNING. HE STOPPED AND CRIED UP TO A HIGH DARK HOUSE WINDOW.

THE HOUSE WINDOW OPENED.

A BOY CREPT DOWN THE ROOF...

AND TO THE GROUND.

THE TWO BOYS RAN OFF, PAST THE INVISIBLE TIME MACHINE INTO THE DARK COLD MORNING.

FOLLOW THEM, STUDY THEIR LIFE PATTERNS. QUICK!

JANET AND WILLIAM AND ROBERT, VISIBLE NOW, RAN ON THE COLD PAVEMENTS OF SPRING.

OTHER CHILDREN RUSHED ALONE OR IN GASPING PAIRS.

Copyright June-July 1953 FANTASTIC UNIVERSE & RAY BRADBURY

THE CHILDREN RAN THROUGH THE SLUMBERING TOWN, THROUGH A PARK, DOWN A HILL, AND FINALLY CAME TO A STOP BEFORE SOME GLEAMING BLUE TRACKS.

WHAT IS IT ?!!

A TRAIN, SILLY, YOU'VE SEEN PICTURES OF THEM!

AND AS THE TIME CHILDREN WATCHED THE TRAIN STOPPED, AND FROM WITHIN STEPPED GIGANTIC GREY ELEPHANTS LIFTING QUESTION-MARK NOZZLES TO THE COLD MORNING SKY. CUMBROUS WAGONS ROLLED FROM THE LONG FREIGHT FLATS, AND LIONS ROARED AND PACED IN BOXED DARKNESS.

WHY-THIS MUST BE A-CIRCUS!

YOU THINK SO?

WHAT-EVER HAPPENED TO THEM?

LIKE CHRISTMAS, I GUESS. JUST VANISHED, LONG AGO.

OH IT'S AWFUL, ISN'T IT.

IT SURE IS.

DISGUSTING, BARBARIC, KEEPING ANIMALS IN CAGES. IF I'D KNOWN THIS WAS HERE,

I'D NEVER LET YOU COME SEE THIS IS A TERRIBLE RITUAL.

OH, YES. AND YET, YOU KNOW, IT'S LIKE A NEST OF MAGGOTS. I WANT TO STUDY IT.

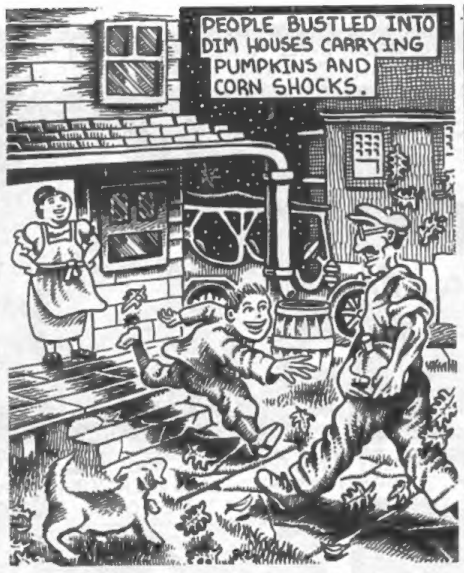
I DON'T KNOW IT'S PRETTY CRAZY. WE MIGHT TRY WRITING A THESIS ON IT IF MR. FIELDS SAYS IT'S ALL RIGHT...

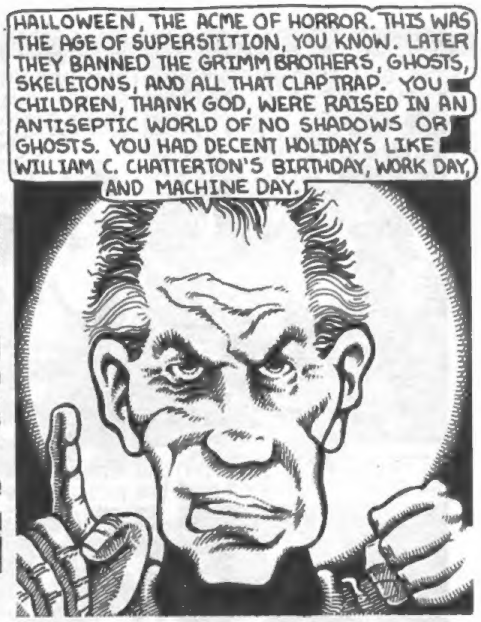
I'M GLAD YOU'RE DIGGING IN HERE, FINDING MOTIVES, STUDYING THIS HORROR. ALL RIGHT - WE'LL SEE THE CIRCUS THIS AFTERNOON.

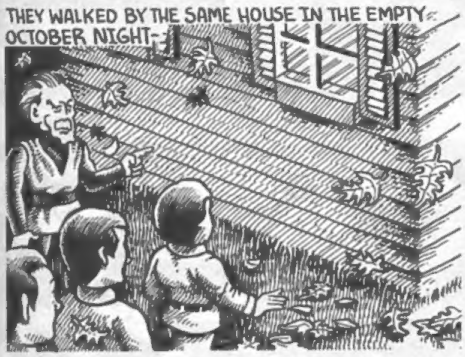
I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK!
THEY WENT BACK TO THE TIME MACHINE, AND ONCE AGAIN ITS ENGINE HUMMED.
MR. FIELDS TOOK THEM TO THE CIRCUS, AND AS THEY LEFT, THE CIRCUS TROMBONE DIED IN THEIR EARS. THE LAST THING THEY SAW WAS CANDY PINK TRAPEZE PEOPLE WHIRLING WHILE BAKING POWDER CLOWNS SHRIEKED AND BOUNDED.
LATER
SO THAT WAS A CIRCUS.
YOU MUST ADMIT PYSCHOVISION'S BETTER.
ALL THOSE NASTY ANIMAL SMELLS, THE EXCITEMENT. THAT'S BAD FOR CHILDREN, ISN'T IT? AND THOSE OLDER PEOPLE SEATED WITH THE CHILDREN. MOTHERS, FATHERS, THEY CALLED THEM. OH, THAT WAS STRANGE.
I WANT TO SEE IT ALL AGAIN. I'VE MISSED THE MOTIVES SOMEWHERE.
I WANT TO MAKE THAT RUN ACROSS TOWN AGAIN IN THE EARLY MORNING. THE COLD AIR ON MY FACE – THE SIDEWALK UNDER MY FEET–
THE CIRCUS TRAIN COMING IN. WAS IT THE AIR AND THE EARLY HOUR THAT MADE THE CHILDREN GET UP AND RUN TO SEE THE TRAIN COME IN?
I WANT TO RETRACE THE ENTIRE PATTERN. WHY SHOULD THEY BE EXCITED?
I FEEL I'VE MISSED OUT ON THE ANSWER.
THEY ALL SMILED SO MUCH.
MANIC-DEPRESSIVES.
WHAT ARE SUMMER VACATIONS? I HEARD THEM TALK ABOUT IT.
THEY SPENT THEIR SUMMERS RACING ABOUT LIKE IDIOTS, BEATING EACH OTHER UP.
I'LL TAKE OUR STATE ENGINEERED SUMMERS OF WORK FOR CHILDREN ANYTIME.
THE TIME MACHINE HUMMED AND STOPPED AGAIN.
3.

THE FOURTH OF JULY NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT. AN ANCIENT HOLIDAY WHEN PEOPLE BLEW EACH OTHER'S FINGERS OFF.
THEY STOOD BEFORE THE SAME HOUSE ON THE SAME STREET BUT ON A SOFT SUMMER EVENING.
ON THE FRONT PORCH LAUGHING CHILDREN TOSSED THINGS OUT THAT WENT BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BUT JANET'S AND ROBERT'S AND WILLIAM'S FACES WERE PINK, NOW BLUE, NOW WHITE WITH FOUNTAINS OF SOFT FIRE.
DON'T RUN! IT'S NOT WAR, DON'T BE AFRAID!
WE'RE ALL RIGHT.
HAPPILY, THEY PROHIBITED FIRE-WORKS A CENTURY AGO, DID AWAY WITH THE WHOLE MESSY EXPLOSION.
CHILDREN DID FAIRY DANCES, WEAVING THEIR NAMES AND DESTINIES ON THE DARK SUMMER AIR WITH WHITE SPARKLERS.
I'D LIKE TO DO THAT. WRITE MY NAME ON THE AIR. SEE? I'D LIKE THAT.
WHAT?
NOTHING.
"BANG!" WHISPERED WILLIAM AND ROBERT, STANDING UNDER THE SOFT SUMMER TREES, IN SHADOW, WATCHING, WATCHING THE RED, WHITE, AND GREEN FIRES ON THE BEAUTIFUL SUMMER NIGHT LAWNS. "BANG!"
THEY RETURNED TO THE TIME MACHINE.
4.

OCTOBER. THE TIME MACHINE PAUSED FOR THE LAST TIME, AN HOUR LATER IN THE MONTH OF BURNING LEAVES.


PEOPLE BUSTLED INTO DIM HOUSES CARRYING PUMPKINS AND CORN SHOCKS.


HALLOWEEN, THE ACME OF HORROR. THIS WAS THE AGE OF SUPERSTITION, YOU KNOW. LATER THEY BANNED THE GRIMM BROTHERS, GHOSTS, SKELETONS, AND ALL THAT CLAPTRAP. YOU CHILDREN, THANK GOD, WERE RAISED IN AN ANTISEPTIC WORLD OF NO SHADOWS OR GHOSTS. YOU HAD DECENT HOLIDAYS LIKE WILLIAM C. CHATTERTON'S BIRTHDAY, WORK DAY, AND MACHINE DAY.


THEY WALKED BY THE SAME HOUSE IN THE EMPTY OCTOBER NIGHT.

INSIDE THE HOUSE, SOME PARTY CHILDREN SQUATTED TELLING STORIES, LAUGHING!

I WANT TO BE INSIDE WITH THEM.
SOCIOLOGICALLY, OF COURSE.

AND PEERED INTO A WINDOW.

NO.
WHAT?

NO, I JUST WANT TO BE INSIDE, I JUST WANT TO STAY HERE, I WANT TO SEE IT ALL AND BE HERE AND NEVER BE ANYWHERE ELSE, I WANT FIRECRACKERS AND PUMPKINS AND CIRCUSES, I WANT CHRISTMASES AND VALENTINES AND FOURTHS, LIKE WE'VE SEEN.

THIS IS GETTING OUT OF HAND...

HOLD ON!
ROBERT, WILLIAM, COME ON!

WILLIAM, I'VE GOT YOU!
JANET, ROBERT – COME BACK HERE! YOU'LL NEVER PASS INTO THE SEVENTH GRADE! YOU'LL FAIL, JANET, BOB – BOB!
AN OCTOBER WIND BLEW WILDLY DOWN THE STREET, VANISHING WITH THE CHILDREN OFF AMONG MOANING TREES.
NO, NOT YOU, TOO, WILLIAM, YOU'RE COMING HOME WITH ME. WE'LL TEACH THOSE OTHER TWO A LESSON THEY WON'T FORGET.
SO THEY WANT TO STAY IN THE PAST, DO THEY?
ALL RIGHT, JANET, BOB STAY IN THIS HORROR, IN THIS CHAOS!
IN A FEW WEEKS, YOU'LL COME SNIVELING BACK HERE TO ME. BUT I'LL BE GONE!
I'M LEAVING YOU HERE TO GO MAD IN THIS WORLD!
HE HURRIED WILLIAM TO THE TIME MACHINE.
DON'T MAKE ME COME BACK HERE ON ANY MORE FIELD EXCURSIONS EVER AGAIN, PLEASE, MR. FIELDS, PLEASE –
SHUT UP!
THEY GOT ON BOARD.
ALMOST INSTANTLY THE TIME MACHINE WHISKED AWAY TOWARD THE FUTURE, TOWARD THE UNDERGROUND HIVE CITIES, THE METAL BUILDINGS, THE METAL FLOWERS, THE METAL LAWNS.
GOOD-BYE, JANET, BOB!
A GREAT COLD OCTOBER WIND BLEW THROUGH THE TOWN LIKE WATER. AND WHEN IT HAD CEASED BLOWING IT HAD CARRIED ALL THE CHILDREN, WHETHER INVITED OR UNINVITED, MASKED OR UNMASKED TO THE DOORS OF HOUSES WHICH CLOSED UPON THEM.
THERE WAS NOT A RUNNING CHILD ANYWHERE IN THE NIGHT.
THE WIND WHINED AWAY IN THE BARE TREETOPS.
AND INSIDE THE BIG HOUSE, IN THE CANDLELIGHT, SOMEONE WAS POURING COLD APPLE CIDER ALL AROUND, TO EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHO THEY WERE.
THE END

THE BRADBURY ARCHIVES

This section reprints items both obscure and semi-obscure, old and new, dealing with Ray Bradbury and his works. They span from the recent review of his play "Dandelion Wine", back to the initial announcement in the August 23, 1963 issue of BACK-STAGE of the filming of "Fahrenheit, 451" and back further still to the January, 1954 issue of PLANET STORIES and the illustration below from an early reprint of his now classic story "A Sound Of Thunder". The illustration was a double-page spread but here the two pieces have been joined into one.

Copyright, 1952, by The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company

Bradbury Play Touching, Funny

'Dandelion Wine' Splendid

By DONALD SANDERS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — "Dandelion Wine" is an alternately hilarious and touching bit of nostalgia about growing up in Illinois in 1928, mounted in a splendid new production by Arena Stage.

THEATER REVIEW

Based on a book by Ray Bradbury, better known for science fiction, it was adapted by Peter John Bailey. Seen briefly at small theaters in New York and Chicago, it has been reworked for the production in Arena's Kreeger Theater, where it continues through May 23.

"Summer in a glass — dandelion wine," one line says early on, and the play goes on to evoke memories of a boy growing up in the mythical city of Green Town, Ill., in the summer of 1928.

THERE ARE the yearnings and sorrows: wanting a pair of costly sneakers, your best friend moving to Milwaukee, likable old people dying, the last ride on a trolley before it is abandoned, the joy and troubles of owning a new runabout.

And there are memories even for 1928, like listening to the decrepit and almost senile Colonel Freeleigh recount his experiences at Shiloh, Antietam, Fort Sumter.

The colonel, long confined to a wheelchair, does have a bit of money and a telephone on which he repeatedly calls a friend in Mexico City, and has the friend hold the phone out the window so he can near the street noises he enjoyed years ago.

MARTIN FRIED directs the cast of 10 characters who play some 23 roles in episodes and vignettes; there is no plot. A comparison with "Our Town" is inevitable, but the plays are quite different. This one is hilarious in spots, and although it has its moments of grief, there are fewer than in Thornton Wilder's classic.

James Tolkan is talented in quite different roles: the colonel, an itinerant junkman and a trolley motorman. Michael Miller plays an eccentric German inventor who produces a happiness machine; his real life son Michael Joyce Miller steals the show time after time as one of three boys in the cast.

The troupe is well balanced, but credit should be given also to Joan Pape, Eleanor D. Wilson and Bill Moor, the narrator.

10:00 2 3 ALFRED HITCHCOCK—Drama

'THE JAR'

At a carnival, country bumpkin Charlie Hill becomes intrigued with a jar containing a mysterious, unidentifiable "thing." Charlie uses all of his money to buy the jar, and when he brings it home he becomes the toast of his community. His backwoods neighbors are equally spellbound by the jar. They, along with Charlie, can't take their eyes off it, wondering what that "thing" inside is.

James Bridges received an Emmy nomination for his script, which he adapted from a short story by well-known science fiction writer Ray Bradbury. Comic Pat Buttram, Gene Autry's veteran sidekick, played his first non-Western TV role in this episode, first seen last February. Alfred Hitchcock is host. (60 min.)

Cast

Charlie Hill .....Pat Buttram

Pat Buttram

Thedy Sue Hill .....Collin Wilcox
Tom Carmody .....James Best
Jahdoo .....William Marshall
Clem .....Slim Pickens
Gramps .....Carl Benton Reid
Juke Marmer .....George Lindsey
Midget .....Bill Barty
Granny Carnation .....Jane Darwell
Emma Jane .....Jocelyn Brando

"Fahrenheit, 451"

Lewis Allen has acquired the production rights to Ray Bradbury's short novel, "Fahrenheit, 451" and intends to film it here in New York next spring. Partnered with Mr. Allen will be Francois Truffaut, the young French movie maker whose "400 Blows" was rewarded with a New York Film Critics Prize in 1961.

Mr. Truffaut wrote the script in French with Jean-Louis Richard and it will be translated into English by Jay Presson Allen, the producer's wife. Shooting will probably start next April.

It is possible that Jean Seberg and Robert Ryan may play two of the four major roles. The title "Fahrenheit, 451" refers to the temperature at which book paper burns in the mad world Mr. Bradbury describes where books are outlawed, firemen are duty bound to burn them and the homes of the lawbreakers as well.

Mr. Allen's office is at 165 West 46 St. He is currently busy doing the stage production "The Ballad of the Sad Cafe" by Carson McCullers in a stage adaptation by Edward Albee.

* * *

BY WAY OF REPORT

'Fahrenheit' on Film —Fare From Abroad

By HOWARD THOMPSON

AFTER several false starts and tentative production announcements, Ray Bradbury's eerie short novel, "Fahrenheit 451," seems set for filming. Lat week Lewis Allen, whose production of "Lord of the Flies" opens here tomorrow at the Tower East, disclosed that he had acquired rights to the story and would film it here entirely in the spring. With Mr. Allen as partner will be Francois Truffaut, the gifted young French moviemaker, whose "400 Blows" won him a New York Film Critics prize in 1961.

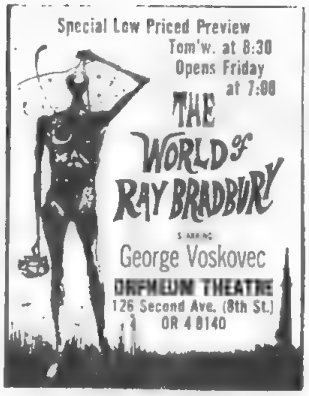
For Mr. Truffaut this, his first film in English, will be done from a French script by himself and Jean-Louis Richard, to be translated into the English version by the producer's wife, Jay Presson Allen. Mr. Allen expects to start shooting next April.

The agenda calls for "8 to 10 weeks of work in all, including about 60 per cent of interiors in a local studio." Mr. Allen said that it was highly probable that Jean Seberg would have one of the four major roles. Also, he added, a script has been forwarded to Robert Ryan, "who seems a good choice" for the key role of the rebel fireman.

The title, of course, refers to the temperature at which book paper burns, in Mr. Bradbury's depiction of an insane world, where books are outlawed, and firemen burn them and the lawbreakers' houses in response to alarms from informers.

"We want to follow the content closely on a low budget, and we're not making the picture in any sense futuristic, with a lot of tricked-out gimmicks," Mr. Allen explained. "The idea is to hold it strictly within a contemporary framework."

The producer, a busy commuter from screen to stage, added that Helen Scott, formerly of the local French Film Office and now a free-lance writer, would be working with Mr. Truffaut and himself. She brought them together for the venture more than a year ago.



THE TWILIGHT ZONE
MAY 18, 1962

"I Sing the Body Electric," by Ray Bradbury. Widower George Rogers has decided that he needs someone to look after his three children—like a robot grandmother. Rod Serling is host.

Cast

Robot Grandmother ...Josephine Hutchinson
George Rogers .....David White
Anne .....Veronica Cartwright

VIEW OF THE MARTIAN LANDSCAPE

NEWARK SUNDAY NEWS, MAY 8, 1966

ONE THOUGHT ABOUT FUTURE — Oscar Award winner Julie Christie and Oscar nominee Oskar Werner are paired in "Fahrenheit 541", Universal flick made at Pinewood Studios, London. Science-fiction picture is set in society which bans written word and in which intellectuals are ruthlessly hunted down. So when Oskar lies next to wife Julie reading paper, it's without words.

REBELS CALL FOR REALITY IN THE FANTASTIC

BY RAY BRADBURY

REPRINTED FROM "THE LOS ANGELES TIMES" DEC. 14, 1975 BY PERMISSION OF RAY BRADBURY

Good Grief, you ask, another Revolution?

Yes, and it came so quietly we hardly noticed.

And the names of the revolutionaries, as represented in these new Peacock Press paperbacks from Bantam ($5.95) are: Dulac, Rackham, Kay Nielsen, Frazetta, Howard Pyle and assorted much-maligned English dreamers of the Pre-Raphaelite school.

Revolutionary? Yes, if you recall that the word revolution simply means a turning-round or turning over. A new thing comes to birth, or an old thing is reborn and seems fresh, brand-spanking new.

The mob is in the street. And its name is Illustration.

The cry is "bread!" And these books will feed thousands hungry for some small imagination and talent.

Will these books knock Jackson Pollock down off his ladder where his ghost has been squeezing paint-filled cats on kitty-litter canvas? They will.

Will these long dead illustrators knock Kline's phantom brush from his unimaginative hand? Indeed. And while they're at it, give the hotfoot to Tingely even as he prepares to explode one more machine and treat us to chaos. His destroyed devices they will sweep up and shape to fine lady robots who will tell Arabian Tales in a language both clear and lovely.

Goodby, non-think, so long, empty picture. Farewell, junk sculpture. Bon voyage, found object. Rest in peace, Andy Warhol.

What has happened? Well, around, about, under and over these nondescript or nondescriptive men a whole Renaissance of description has been reborn. Illustration has indeed crept back. Hated, reviled, the cur of time, made to lie out in winter snows with Wyeth, biding its time, illustration has finally been fetched into the house to be washed, curried, and allowed space on the hearth-mat.

Because of the mob, the new children of this generation.

The Peacock Press, which means Ian and Betty Ballantine, formerly of Ballantine books, and their editor David Larkin, looked across our land and what did they see? Millions of young folk starving for lack of visual poetry, the vivid metaphor, the picture you could tell was a picture.

All of this is blasphemous, reactionary, old-fashioned to the point of banality. In the art world, anyway.

And it all goes back to the flower children, some 10 years ago, when the spirits of the Pre-Raphaelite Juliets, King Arthurs, mad Ophelias danced over the children's heads. The college liberals (or so they imagined themselves) were in need of radical change. And sometimes the most radical thing you can do is rob a tomb and slap a forgotten artist to life. The change, the revolution, was back to sustenance, image, imagination, talent.

Slowly, postcard by postcard, poster by poster, the old dead dreams reappeared on college and high school walls.

Arthur Rackham, for instance, long ignored as a mere Children's mud-dauber, got his bones together and was exhumed in the basements of art colleges and the tall attics of junior highs. His books, toss-aways at 90 cents each just 20 years ago, now sell at $90 or $170 a crack.

Seeing all this, the Peacock Press has in recent months revived the Arabian night phantasms of Edmund Dulac, the pirate illustrations of Howard Pyle, the Golden Age dream worlds of Kay Nielsen and the comic-cartoonist graduated into the high-grotesque poster-world, Frank Frazetta. They have also published a "Christmas Book" that lists itself as a graphic celebration of magazine covers and interior illustration during the last 70 years. And, finally, a vivid run through love and lust titled "Temptation" and including work from Fra Angelico (one of the first great cartoonist propagandists for the Vatican, on up through Hogarth, Fuseli and Dali.

And to this the Pre-Raphaelite "English Dreamers" that runs a forgotten gamut from Dante Gabriel Rossetti to Millais to Burne-Jones and you have an impossible and unspeakable Revolution indeed.

And just when millions of closet-illustration lovers like myself had begun to believe we deserved the name infidel and belonged out on the lawn with that dog Imagination and that hybrid cat Dream and those dirty intuitive words: Ability to Draw and Paint Well.

So Peacock Press and a lot of old ghosts will teach us art grammar again.

Are children and young adults truly responsible for this latter-day saint revival, for Valhalla being reopened, reventilated, repopulated, for Mt. Olympus being reinvented? Have our offspring found the Pre-Raphaelites below-stairs like Dracula's servants, and at long last invited them up into afternoon light for tiffen and tea?

And if so, why so? Why didn't the scornful neglect, which was part of our life and blood, continue?

The secret probably lies in the simultaneous growth of cinema and comic strips. The camera that seemed to have killed realistic/romantic art dead in the gallery, began to speak and move into cinemas. There it stuffed

our heads with images of skyscraper gorillas, jungle apemen and finally James Bond--taller, wider, louder than the rest.

In comic strips we were fed Nemo's Dream Worlds, Prince Valiant's Round Table, Mad magazine devouring Presidents for breakfast.

We became, then, through both media, image-oriented.

As others much more learned, wittier than myself have pointed out, simultaneous with the above artists, art critics and gallery owners fled in the opposite direction. The pell-mell Escape From The Image was on. Any artist who admitted he knew how to draw humans was given a ticket on the Oblivion Express. Any gallery owner who hung a watercolor rightside up was unclean. Any critic whose rhetoric was springwater clear was sent to Brainwash Academy to bone up on maunder, flim-flam, the double-reverse verb and the self-destroying adjective.

The Escape From The Image was so successful some artists vanished not only into thin air but were sucked into their own navels. A collection of these navels was held at a midtown New York gallery last July, described as a nonhappening. Taking them at their word, no one showed.

Now all of this running one way toward Image in films and comic strips, and the other way in the art galleries produced what?

A vacuum.

Which, eventually had to be filled.

For man is nothing if he is not the metaphor-making animal.

If we forget that, we forget our mind and its ability to add sums and make sense.

The ability to fantasize is the ability to survive.

And the ability to make metaphors is the prime way to fantasy.

Lose fantasy, lose metaphor, and you lose your mind. You can no longer add one and one and get two, or even three, if you wish.

It follows we have been losing our minds for some 50 years or more.

We have rejected myth and metaphor and their ability to fuse ideas in favor of those mindless abstract arts that end in loss.

No wonder we cannot read. If metaphor and myth are missing from part of our lives, why bother to even try to read? Super-abstraction has wiped the slate, as well as the canvas clean. The head of Medusa not only freezes us in our television rooms via the electric beast that squats there, but non-thought, non-sight, non-idea hangs and dies in every gallery.

Sensing this before it is too late, the children, growing fast, paper their rooms with fourth-rate Maxfield Parrish rather than put up with the meaningless vaporings of an Andy Warhol.

In sum, forth-rate something is better than first-rate nothing.

The Peacock Press moves with them in this happy Children's Crusade, and not with fourth rate, or third, for that matter but often, as you will see, first-rate stuff.

Choosing favorites is difficult. My own taste runs less to Kay Nielsen, whose work is a trifle too elaborate and sweet, and more toward Dulac, Rackham and Pyle. Their imaginations teemed with smokes, winds and a blowing sense of pasts forgotten, futures recalled. They romanced themselves well, calling things out of dark corners, yanking visions down out of clouds the way we once could when we lay on hills and knew the sky. With them we dare to send strange kites up to dare lightnings, prowl whispering attics for dusts that suddenly glint eyes and speak mystery. These three, to the end of their days, were a fount a flesh, vivid, untiring images.

"Temptation" is filled with works obviously painted over some lady's shoulder in Mid-swim. They range from the moral fables of Jan Van Eyck and Bosch down through Hogarth and Fuseli, who could inhale fire and paint with smoke. These are, of course, illustration become first-class gallery art.

As for "The English Dreamers", so sorely neglected, they haunt Ophelia's drowning-place, Chaucer's Court, Merlin's forest and send us back, as films often do, to Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, who were their first families.

The introductions of these books, by such as Keith Nicholson, Virgil Pomfret or Rowland Alzea are historically brief and, almost always, aesthetically satisfying. There is an absence of pedantic theory that is, I suppose, inevitable. These works are, after all, literary in genesis, which precludes fancy web-spinning as to birth and afterbirth.

And, as if to prove their money is where their mouth is, the Peacock Press has just released a 1976 Worlds of Fantasy Calendar to encourage new, very new young artists to get drunk on old wines. You will find excellent work here by young women like Carol

Large-format paperback art books have been published under the Peacock Press/Bantam Book imprint.

Lawson and Carol Binch as well as an astounding contribution, "Castle Gormenghast" by young Ian Miller, a recreation of "Wind and the Willows" by 1946-born Wayne Anderson and a splendid "Sea Witch" by Frank Frazetta, born in 1928 and with a long fine way to go yet. One hopes this calendar becomes a yearly thing indeed, to bring forth competitive works from many countries.

How will the modern art world take to these Peacock Press books on mostly English distempers and a few mad American goblin fools? Probably with distemper, mono-maniacal paranoia and Rumpelstiltskin syndromes.

And the rest of us? We will go on leafing through these inexpensive paperback phantasmagorias, reveling in an old art as if it were suddenly new.

In the twilight of the gods where does one go for gods? To children's books.

In a time of diminished image, where art smothers for lack of metaphor, for the soul illustrated, the dream revived, where does one go? Also to those same books.

In a time when art has failed us, illustration must substitute and reach its own heights. Lower down the mountain, yes. Transcendent? Well, no. But good nourishing fun. And the sort of stuff Nietzsche spoke of when he said:

"We have art that we do not die of the truth."

BRADBURY, FREBERG VS. THE PRUNE PEOPLE

The following article appeared in a magazine called NEPENTHE, published by a college in California, in the Spring 1969 issue. Not only is the article's author uncredited but the magazine no longer exists and it is virtually impossible to find any of those who were connected with it. The issue of NEPENTHE itself in which this article appeared is a rather rare item in itself due to the relative obscurity of the publication combined with the fact that no source of back issues for it exists. Even some of the Bradbury collectors who are completists lack this issue. Were it not that all I had immediate access to was a zerox, I would have done a facsimile reproduction of it. The article itself concerns the Sunsweet Pitted Prunes commercial done in 1969 which starred Ray Bradbury as himself on an enormous futuristic television screen where he argues with the announcer's voice (Stan Freberg) over the accuracy of use of the commercial product which is attributed to having been mentioned in his stories.

* * *

Ray Bradbury writes stories about rocket ships and he refuses to fly in an airplane.

"I've written stories from a woman's viewpoint without ever having been a woman, and I think I hit it fairly close."

So why should he have to fly in an airplane?

The logic is inescapable.

Ray Bradbury has also never been a pitted prune. But that didn't stop him from letting his friend, satirist Stan Freberg, talk him into appearing in a T.V. commercial to move those little dried fruits off the supermarket shelves for one of Freberg's clients, the Sunsweet prune people.

So it would be that the young Ray Douglas Bradbury, weened in Waukegan on the pulp magazines "Amazing Stories" and "Weird Tales", would grow up to face his greatest science-fictional adventure with the scourge of Madison Avenue when... RAY BRADBURY AND STAN FREBERG MEET THE PRUNE PEOPLE.

* * *

While Bradbury was poring over Buck Rodgers and Jules Verne, a young Freberg was paying homage to a different pantheon -- S.J. Perelman, Robert Benchley, and Alexander Wollcott.

Freberg is one of those strange people who looks almost like himself in person. The first time I saw him he was leaving a Hollywood art theatre with his wife after a polemical Jean-Loc Godard film, "La Chinoise."

"Doesn't that guy look just like Stan Freberg?" I said. It was understandable. He was Stan Freberg.

* * *

If Freberg looks almost like himself in person, there is no mistaking Ray Bradbury. He looks exactly like himself in person. He's wearing his short hair again, but there's a space age look about those squinting eyes, tiny and intense behind lenses thick as the heat shield on an Apollo capsule.

That Freberg and Bradbury are friends is not odd. The talent of every age gravitates together.

That pitted prunes should join them for their first collaboration is less plausible.

* * *

Freberg once said, "Show me a happy, well-adjusted extroverted kid at 10, and I'll show you an accountant at 30." Both Freberg and Bradbury must owe a profound debt to neurotic childhoods, for satirist Freberg produces some of the best commercials in the land, and writer Bradbury is the best living author of science fiction.

Bradbury worked out his childhood fears and conflicts in many of his early short stories. He was afraid of the dark until he was 22. And it was while the lights were left on that he was busy becoming the poetic seer of a generation in books like "The Martian Chronicles", "The Illustrated Man," and "Fahrenheit 451".

Freberg has been motivated by rage. The kids who once tied him to a tree and whipped him when he was a small boy did not realize what they were starting. And there's probably more than one grey-flannel adman on Madison Avenue who wishes those kids had never let little Stanley loose.

"The satirist is a man trapped within a point of view", says Freberg. He claims that even if he doesn't want to, the congruities stare at him and he reacts. "The Thing that keeps me going is outrage -- sheer, absolute, non-drained off anger at the world and all these people. But outrage in its raw form is not very salable. The hard part comes in covering it with a candy-coating of humor."

Freberg is a profoundly ethical man, and records like "Green Christmas," an attack on the commerciality of the Yule season had established him in the 50's as the Jonathan Edwards of the mass media: His brand of fire and brimstone may be closer than he realizes to the style of his father, a Baptist preacher.

In 1956 Stan Freberg was the last radio comedian on the CBS network. He was Jack Benny's successor. Freberg's satire was good enough to threaten the bladder control of the nervous CBS front office executives, who cancelled him after 13 weeks.

Pointed parodies like a sketch chronicling the competition between two imaginary Las Vegas hotels, the El Sodom and the Rancho Gomorrah, with floor shows of the Suez crises and a nuclear explosion, live on stage, helped make Freberg's name as a satirist, and his short run on CBS.

In the 50's his albums, like "Stan Freberg Presents the United States of America", sold by the millions. He was an equally successful concert performer when he entered advertising as what he calls "an outraged consumer."

Freberg says, "Looking for truth in advertising is like looking for Howard Hughes." Not only must ads sell the product, he believes, but every ad "must make a cultural contribution, too."

Today Freberg commands $50,000, plus production costs for an advertising campaign. He points with pride to the Great Seal of Freberg, Ltd., designed by Saul Bass, with the Latin words to live by etched beneath, "Ars Gratia Pecunaie" -- Art for Money's Sake.

One of Freberg's clients is the Sunsweet Prune Company -- "Today the pits, tomorrow the wrinkles... Sunsweet Marches ON." Freberg decided it would be a fine idea to make a prune commercial introducing a new, futuristic product -- pitted prunes in mini-

packs -- with his friend, science fiction writer Ray Bradbury.

Freberg commercials are produced "by the seat of the pants." The scene is usually a sound stage at the Sam Goldwyn lot on Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood. The sound stage is an echoing building that looks like an airplane hanger with cameras and cat walks. Everybody shows up for an 8 a.m. call to see what happens. Except Freberg, who gets there about 10, to interrupt the crew's second coffee break.

On the day the Bradbury spot is to start shooting, Freberg is finishing a commercial for a battery additive firm in which the script calls for a falling safe to almost land on one of the actors. After every take a new balsa wood floor has to be put in for the safe to crash through. "A new rule," barks Freberg to the crew after a bad take, "never work with animals, children, or safes."

A new floor is hurriedly constructed, and Freberg watches the next take on the videoprompter. He's still not satisfied. He doesn't like the way the floor shatters. "That dust will never work in this town again."

As the day wears on it becomes clear that Freberg does not settle for less than exactly what he wants, and it becomes clear that he will not get to the Bradbury spot today. Freberg's client, the president of the battery additive firm, sits stiffly in his business suit watching. It is a perma press suit, and it is the only thing about him that refuses to wrinkle.

Freberg goes over to placate his client between takes. Freberg wears cords and a turtleneck. His long-styled hair droops over his ears, and with his large glasses he looks like a mod pixie. "Your company may end up bankrupt at the end of this shooting, but think of the good commercials you'll have to show at parties." The man smiles wanly, his eyes searching the set for any reassuring sight, an executive washroom, or a water cooler.

"You're a good client. You get the good client award", Freberg encourages.

While they're making another new floor, Freberg telephones Bradbury, who, it is learned, is at home with the flu.

"Look, it isn't like I could cast it with another Ray Bradbury. Maybe I could get Rod Serling," he teases Bradbury over the phone. "No," Freberg dismisses the idea, "not after I saw 'Assault on a Queen'", (a Serling screenplay).

Almost without transition Freberg is asking Bradbury what he thinks of "Myra Breckenridge," a Gore Vidal bestseller. Freberg says he hated it, "I even wrote Buckley a fan letter."

Then there is another abrupt shift in Freberg's half of the conversation. "You're gonna make a fine actor Ray," Freberg assures his friend. "I'll tell you what to wear and send you a script."

* * *

Bradbury is on the set early the day of shooting. Freberg shows up about 10:30, a couple of hours late.

The commercial is to introduce tiny prunes in mini-packs for lunch box trade. And Freberg wants to put space age pitted prunes in "The Martian Chronicles."

Bradbury stands under the arc of lights as Freberg readies for a take. "You're not going to shift your feet, are you Raymond?" Freberg chides gently. Bradbury steadies his sturdy frame.

Director Freberg motions to a heavy, bearded man perched on a ladder. This man represents a stroke of Freberg casting genius. He does the psychedelic light shows at L.A. night spots like the Troubadour. His specialty is flashing, colored particles. The light show begins on the screen behind Bradbury.

"Okay, Ray," says Freberg, "now do this just like you were being interviewed by Rona Barrett," L.A. television gossip. "And try not to throw your weight on the left foot."

"It's got a crimp," Bradbury uncrimps himself.

Freberg starts reading from the script. He is the offstage announcer in the spot and as he switches to one of his deep, baritone voices, you can see the fine spray he showers on the microphone.

"You are looking at Mr. Ray Bradbury...author of "The Martian Chronicles." Freberg starts to discuss the book. "In the year 2000 we will be moved from place to place in pneumatic people tubes, and in every lunch box Sunsweet pitted prunes in mini-packs."

"Wait a minute," Bradbury interrupts with a scowl. "I never mentioned prunes in any of my stories. What are these people trying to pull, anyway?" and they spend the rest of the commercial arguing about it.

After a few more takes Freberg turns to his wife, Donna, who is his associate producer and personal secretary. "I'm purposely not asking you what time it is," he says.

"What difference does it make," she says, "you never pay any attention to it."

Freberg doesn't like the lighting. "I was talking to my color man in the hall the other day and I told him the green I had in mind was the same as the green on that girl's dress who was passing by.

"You know what he said, 'that's not green, it's blue.' That was the first inkling I had I was in trouble with this guy."

Mrs. Freberg clocks each take with a stop watch. A few seconds must be cut. Freberg has to do an instant rewrite. "Don't despair, Bradbury," Freberg says and he wanders off mumbling to himself among the equipment and crew.

Bradbury is sitting on a stool on stage and he begins to hold forth for a small audience that has gathered. He is discussing the race issue. "The history of America is dreadful," and the words make you think of a short story in "The Illustrated Man" called "The Other Foot" about a planet of all black expatriates from the earth who are asked for refuge by the white survivors of our world's nuclear holocaust.

Bradbury climbs down during the break and gets a Clark bar from the dressing room. He and Freberg's 12-year old daughter, who is also on the set, discuss the relative merits of Clark bars versus O. Henry's. "They're not as good as Clark Bars," Bradbury says difinitively, gesturing with his Clark Bar, as she munches her O. Henry unconvinced.

Bradbury walks over to the coffee urn and is joined by Paul Condylis, radio performer and Freberg sidekick. Condylis has acted in many Freberg commercials. "You have nothing to worry about Paul, I'm going back to the novel," Bradbury laughs.

Without much coaxing, Bradbury is talking about writing and life. "There should be a celebration of each day of being alive," he says.

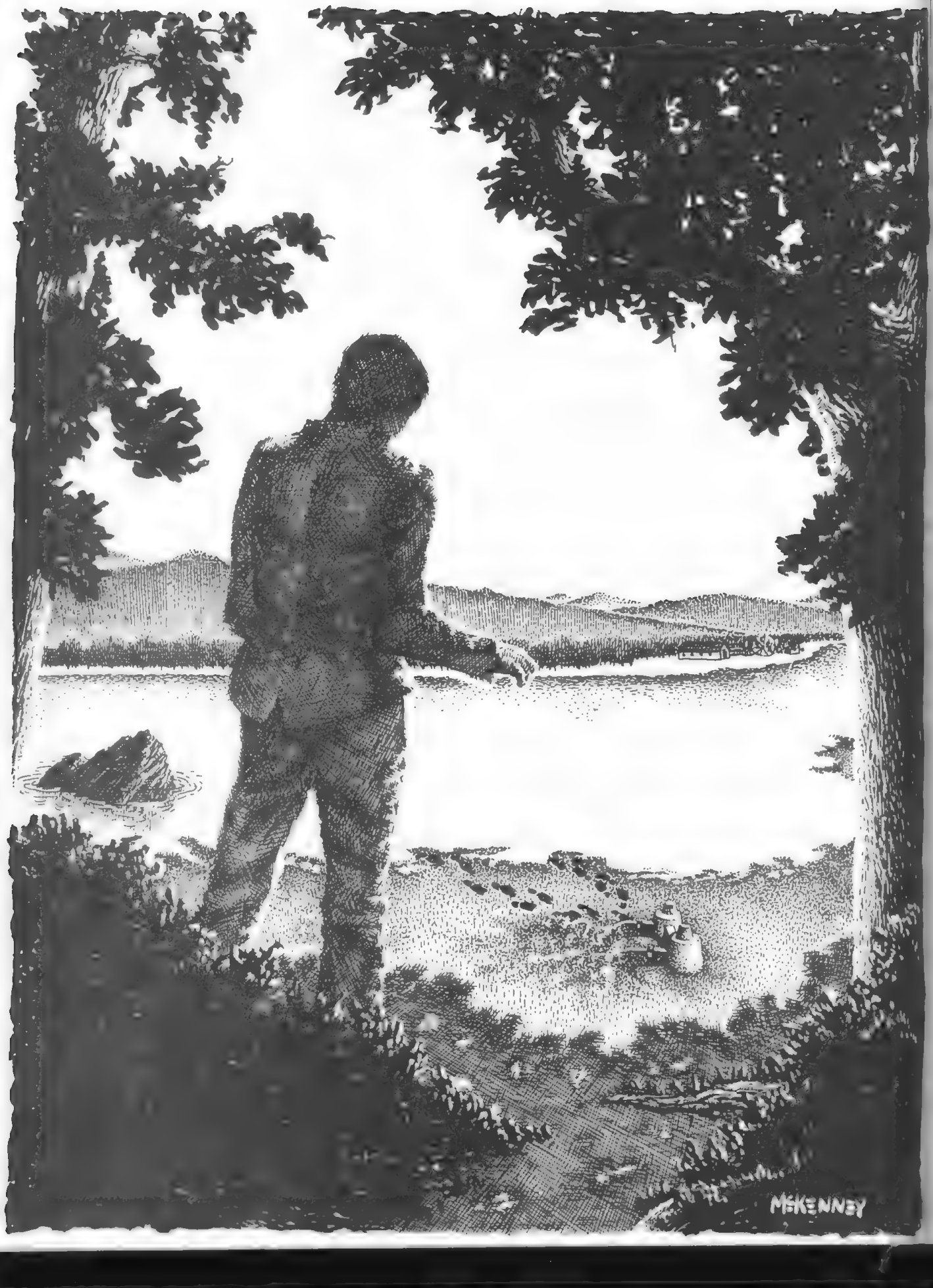
"We must all live and die. If the writer can say something about that to make someone live better and accept death with dignity, he has done something."

"If you can end this life with one woman you love, and one friend, you've done something. My wife is that woman, and Stan is that kind of friend."

Freberg mumbles his way back through the cameras and wires to where we are standing. "I've got the line," and he tells Bradbury the change in the script he wants. There is no reaction. Freberg shifts uneasily. "You don't like it. Well, as we say in the business, you're too close to it Ray," and they both laugh.

* * *

Ray Bradbury once said, "There are only two honorable professions -- medicine and writing, because doctors heal the body and writers heal the soul." It is certain he would make some room for the people who make us laugh, like his friend Stan Freberg.


McKENNEY

THE POWER OF RAY BRADBURY

BY JAMES VAN HISE

An appropriate question to ask in this special issue devoted largely to the appreciation of a single living writer is "Why Ray Bradbury? Why him instead of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, Robert Bloch or even Isaac Asimov?" The answer is simple. It's because as much as I've read and admired stories by these other authors, yes even been thrilled by them, I've never read a story by any of them where after I was finished reading I wiped my brow and remarked that I don't think I'll be quite the same person I was before I read that. It takes a writer of no small talent to accomplish that effect with me.

The first story of his I read which affected me in this way was the story which introduced me to his work. That story was "The Lake".

It's a powerful story. A story a man's return to the place of his youth, of his discoveries and revelations. It's a story of things found...and things lost. It introduced a theme recurrant in many (but certainly not all) of Bradbury's stories. That of the importance of those things we have and cherish in our youth, and that no matter how we may think we leave them behind, they will always be there in one form or another, whether they be with us or waiting to remind us. The past shapes our present and our future, and to try and leave it behind is to try and ignore it as if it never was and what would be the point in that?

I read this story when I was sixteen, on the verge of becoming an adult. Already the forces of impending maturity were attempting to compell to give up many of those things I'd cherished as a youth and all the while something inside me was saying, "Why should I?", but I could never come up with a good enough answer as to why not. After all they were adults and they did know better, didn't they? After reading that story I had the answer and I also had a greater understanding of myself. I believed what Bradbury believed before I read that story, but before then I hadn't understood why. He told me why, and in terms more convincing than the opposition could ever hope to conjure up. After all they didn't have Ray Bradbury on their side and I did!

And so I conformed enough to get by, but I never allowed myself to become completely absorbed in the drudgery of life as so many adults did. I never gave up comic books or other such enjoyments in spite of how much I was pressured to. Each time I firmly dug in my heels and said, "No!".

I continued reading more Bradbury and being introduced to other concepts such as appreciating the vastness of the simple things in life, and again to treasure the wonders of one's youth and not totally abandone them when one reached adulthood simply because one reached adulthood. I found this philosophy echoed and described in many different ways in more stories such as "Something Wicked This Way Comes", "Dandelion Wine", "Hail and Farewell", and "Time In Thy Flight". All of these made profound impressions on me in one way or another so that I would periodically return to them for a renewal of the experience.

When I first read "Time In Thy Flight" I immediately imagined Mr. Fields as being played by Raymond Massey with his stern delivery and his clenched fist. This is why I had Ron Wilber draw him this way.

But not all of Bradbury's stories echo and propound this philosophy. Some of them were written for different reasons. To tell a different story. To warn against different demons, or to tell a different kind of story in a different way.

His novel "The Martian Chronicles", certainly the most famous of all his books, is first and foremost a story of mankind. It shows that mankind is the same where ever he goes. It tells the story of people set against the far vaster background of the story of the colonization of Mars. In this setting we meet the last lonely Martian, who finally dies from other people's loneliness. We meet the last man and the last woman left on Mars, and he can't stand her. We meet a man who has come to Mars to wreck his revenge on people from Earth with a second House of Usher. And more. So much more.

One of Bradbury's greatest stories doesn't have a single human character. It's "There Will Come Soft Rains" and it's a story whose words are so beautifully crafted that it reads almost like poetry its imagery is so stunning. It's the story of a house, and yet it's also the story of a servant of man finally dying long after man himself is no more, still serving even when there are none to serve, and in the end dying because of that. Some writers toil all their lives and never produce a story as unique as this, or as good.

The power of Ray Bradbury is that he is able to touch something in us. Something which we recognize and understand even if it is something we've never encountered before.

Bradbury can entertain and at the same time teach, without having to preach.

But above all else he is first and foremost an entertainer. Not all of his stories are written to empart some great wisdom or to state some great thought. Some are written just to entertain, as so many science fiction stories are. "A Sound Of Thunder" is one of these and it is one of his most popular stories (And from looking at the illustrations which seem to fill this issue of RBCC one might think one of his only stories, but its dinosaur theme lends it well to illustration especially in light of fandom's own deep and undying love for the dinosaur).

Bradbury's stories have the ability to touch one and elicit a response. To affect those he comes in contact with as well. The late Charles Beaumont was a friend of his who was most certainly affected by Bradbury and his work as his screenplay for THE SEVEN FACES OF DR. LAO clearly demonstrates. That film contains so many of the elements which mark much of Ray Bradbury's own work that it is a joy to behold, as that film is most certainly a tribute from one friend to another.

His stories often have the ability to inspire people. To turn them around and change their outlook. It is not unusual to find someone who says that the entire direction of their life was changed by reading some of Ray Bradbury's stories. But like anything else, one can only be changed by reading his work if one is open to this change, and this generally takes form in a person who is more introverted, more aware of themselves to begin with. It is this self awareness, this awareness of life itself, that is the power of Ray Bradbury.

RAY B. AND E.C.

BY JAMES VAN HISE

The story of how E.C. came to adapt many of Ray Bradbury's short stories is a well known one but an article about those adaptations would not be complete without repeating it just the same.

As any E.C. fan knows, as great as many of their stories were, not all of them were totally original. E.C. "stole" ideas from various sources including the science fiction magazines. They even did swipes of two H.P. Lovecraft stories. Their adaptations of Ray Bradbury started the same way, only that time they got caught!

The first story they adapted went unnoticed, that being "What The Dog Dragged In!" in VAULT OF HORROR #22 (Which was actually "The Emissary" with the central characters altered).

They were discovered when in WEIRD FANTASY #13 they published a strip which they called "Home To Stay" but which was in reality a clever reworking of the two Ray Bradbury stories "The Rocket Man" and "Kaleidoscope" into one tale.

A fan wrote to Bradbury and pointed this out to him whereupon Ray sent a pleasant letter to E.C. mentioning that he had noticed the adaptation of his story and that by some oversight they had forgotten to send him the adaptation fee. He also requested that in the future they put his copyright on the story to protect it. The following week he received a check and a request to do more adaptations, but this time he would receive full credit.

And receive full credit he did! E.C. went all out on future adaptations and even displayed his name on the cover of many of the issues which featured his stories. E.C. went on to do twenty-five legal adaptations of his stories, some of which became classics of comic art.

At the time the adaptations themselves met with mixed reactions as professional SF & horror stories tend to be a bit more complex than were the comics of the early 1950's. Some readers loved them, while others frankly admitted that they couldn't figure them out!

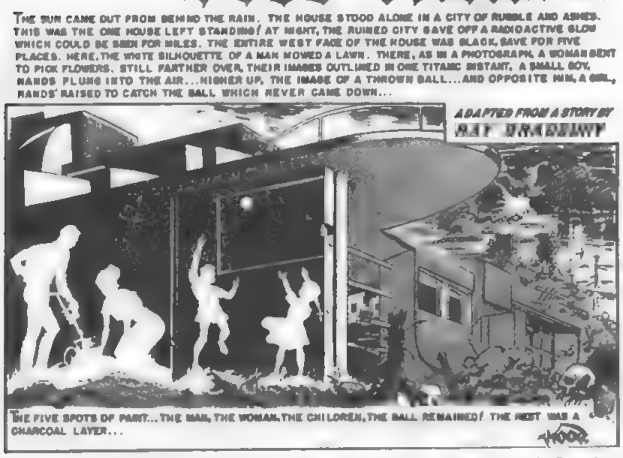
The letters column in WEIRD FANTASY #19 contains a typical cross-section of reader reaction. These two letters from it display the average reader reaction: "After reading your dramatization of Ray Bradbury's "There Will Come Soft Rains," I felt I had to write. I think it is the finest piece of work I have ever seen in any of your mags."

While another reader states, "We have long loved E.C. comics, but Ray Bradbury is awful. His stories don't make sense...just wasted space in the books. We like to read E.C. mags but Bradbury has got to go!"

Needless to say he didn't and those adaptations which some readers felt "don't make sense" have been hailed from one end of comic fandom to the other. They introduced many readers to Bradbury's work at that time and in the mid-sixties introduced others through the two Ballantine Books reprints, THE AUTUMN PEOPLE and TOMORROW MIDNIGHT. Curiously enough, I myself had only been reading Bradbury for about a year when I latched on to those reprints and they furthered my own interest in Bradbury at the same time as I was just discovering the wonders of E.C. comics. It would be nice if Ballantine would reissue those books as the $5.00 and up price tag placed on them by many dealers now places them out of reach of many of the fans who would love them the most.

I THOUGHT...
PEOPLE GROW. I HAVE GROWN, BUT SHE HAS NOT CHANGED. SHE IS STILL SMALL. DEATH DOES NOT PERMIT GROWTH OR CHANGE. SHE STILL HAS GOLDEN HAIR. SHE WILL BE FOREVER YOUNG AND I WILL LOVE HER FOREVER, OH GOD, I WILL LOVE HER FOREVER.
THE LIFEGUARD TRED UP THE BACK. I WALKED BY MYSELF, DOWN THE BEACH, DOWN TOWARD WHERE HE'D FOUND HER. THERE, AT THE WATER'S EDGE, LAY A SAND CASTLE, ONLY HALF-BUILT
JUST LIKE TALLY AND I USED TO BUILD THEM. SHE WALK... AND I HALF. I LOOKED AT IT. I KNELT BESIDE IT AND I SAW THE LITTLE PRINTS OF FEET COMING IN FROM THE LAKE AND GOING BACK OUT TO THE LAKE AGAIN AND NOT EVER RETURNING
AND THEN I KNEW
I'LL...HELP YOU FINISH IT, TALLY
I DID. I BUILT THE REST OF IT UP VERY SLOWLY, THEN AROSE...
... AND TURNED AWAY AND WALKED OFF, SO AS NOT TO WATCH IT CRUMBLE IN THE WAVES THE WAY ALL THINGS CRUMBLE. I WALKED BACK UP THE BEACH TO WHERE A STRANGE WOMAN NAMED MARGARET WAITED FOR ME, SMILING

there will come soft rains...


THE SUN CAME OUT FROM BEHIND THE RAIN. THE HOUSE STOOD ALONE IN A CITY OF RUBBLE AND ASHES. THIS WAS THE ONE HOUSE LEFT STANDING! AT NIGHT, THE RUINED CITY GAVE OFF A RADIOACTIVE GLOW WHICH COULD BE SEEN FOR MILES. THE ENTIRE WEST FACE OF THE HOUSE WAS BLACK, SAVE FOR FIVE PLACES. HERE, THE WHITE SILHOUETTE OF A MAN MOWED A LAWN. THERE, AS IN A PHOTOGRAPH, A WOMAN BENT TO PICK FLOWERS. STILL FARTHER OVER, THEIR IMAGES OUTLINED IN ONE TITANIC INSTANT, A SMALL BOY, HANDS FLUNG INTO THE AIR...HIGHER UP, THE IMAGE OF A THROWN BALL...AND OPPOSITE HIM, A GIRL, HANDS RAISED TO CATCH THE BALL WHICH NEVER CAME DOWN...
ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY RAY BRADBURY
THE FIVE SPOTS OF PAINT...THE MAN, THE WOMAN, THE CHILDREN, THE BALL REMAINED! THE REST WAS A CHARCOAL LAYER...
WOOF

The following is an annotated index to the E.C. adaptations of stories by Ray Bradbury. For easy reference they will be listed by comic title group.

THE VAULT OF HORROR #22 - Dec.1951-Jan.1952- "What the dog dragged in!" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Kamen.

An adaptation of "The Emissary" with the main characters changed. A fair job.

THE VAULT OF HORROR #29 - Feb.-March 1953 - "Let's Play Poison!" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Davis

A reverse of Bradbury's usual portrayal of children in stories. An excellent adaptation. Jack Davis outdoes himself on the art.

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Mars is Heaven!

THE SHIP CAME DOWN FROM SPACE. IT CAME DOWN FROM THE STARS AND THE SILENT GULFS OF SPACE. IT WAS A NEW SHIP, THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND. IT HAD FIRE IN ITS BELLY AND MEN IN ITS BODY, AND IT MOVED WITH CLEAN SILENCE, FIERY AND HOT. A CROWD HAD GATHERED AT ITS NEW YORK LAUNCHING SITE AND SHOUTED AND WAVED THEIR HANDS UP INTO THE SUNLIGHT... AND THE ROCKET HAD JERKED UP, BLOOMED OUT GREAT FLOWERS OF HEAT AND COLOR, AND RUN AWAY INTO SPACE ON THE *FIRST VOYAGE TO MARS!* AND NOW, IT WAS DECELERATING WITH METAL EFFICIENCY IN THE UPPER ZONES OF MARS'S ATMOSPHERE...

NAVIGATOR LUSTIG, ARCHAEOLOGIST HINKSTON, AND CAPTAIN JOHN BLACK WATCHED MARS SWING UP UNDER THEM...

THE SHIP LANDED SOFTLY ON A LAWN OF GREEN GRASS. OUTSIDE, UPON THE LAWN, STOOD AN IRON DEER. FURTHER UP THE LAWN, A TALL BROWN VICTORIAN HOUSE SAT IN THE QUIET SUNLIGHT. AN OLD SWING WHICH WAS HOOKED INTO THE PORCH CEILING SWUNG BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH, IN A LITTLE BREEZE...

ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY

RAY BRADBURY

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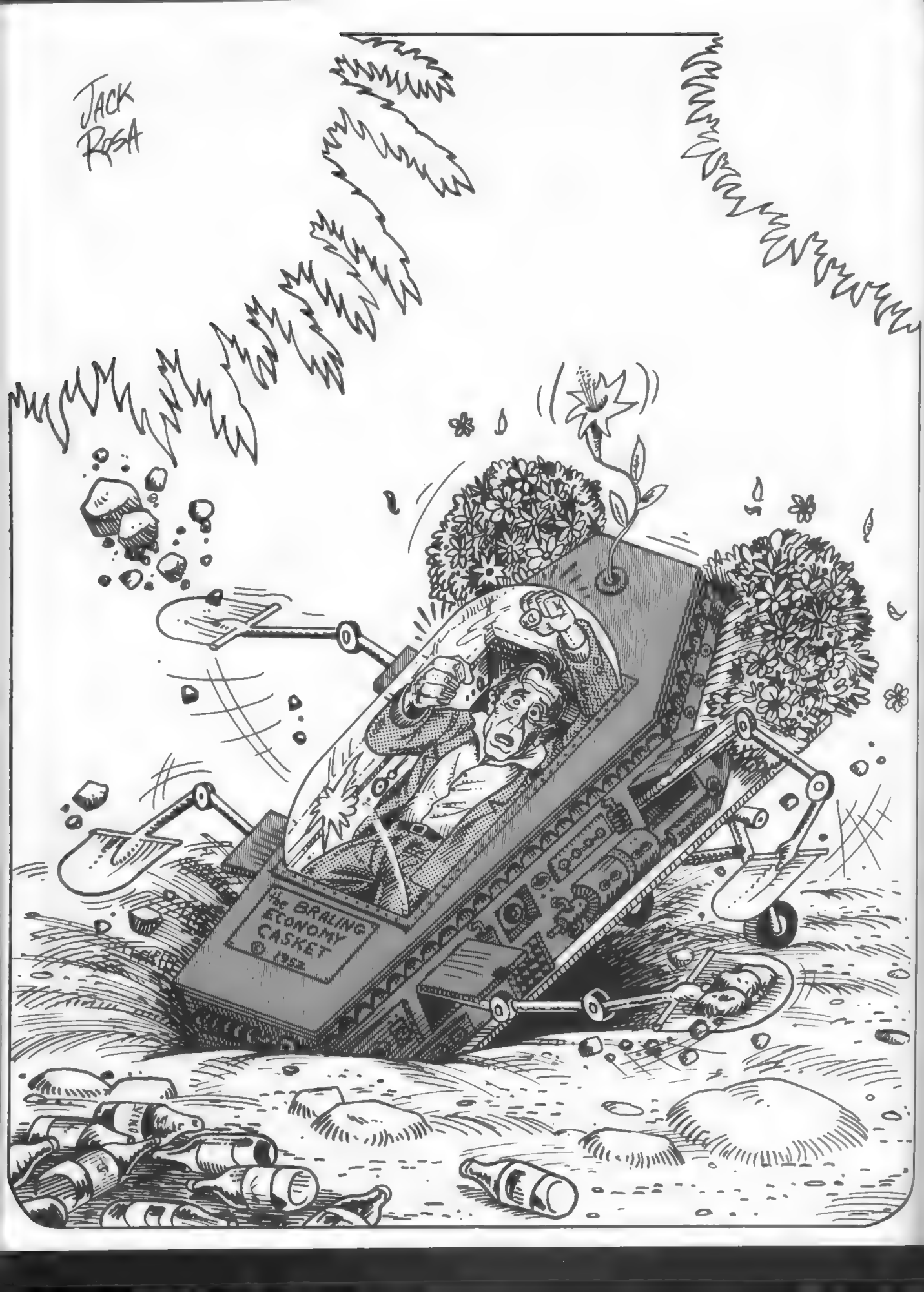

JACK ROSA
the BRALING ECONOMY CASKET
© 1952

THE VAULT OF HORROR #31 - June-July 1953 - "The Lake" - 6 pages - artist: Joe Orlando

A very sensitive and powerful adaptation; one of the top three done by E.C. and one of the top three strips drawn by Orlando for E.C. as well! Cannot be praised too highly.

WEIRD FANTASY #13 - May-June 1952 - "Home To Stay!" - 6 pages - artist: Wally Wood

A talented meshing of "The Rocket Man" and "Kaleidoscope" produces an even better story. Very moving. Wood's art is beautiful to the extreme. Excellent!

WEIRD FANTASY #17 - Jan.-Feb. 1953 - "There Will Come Soft Rains..." - 7 pages - artist: Wally Wood

Although this adaptation omits the poem by Sara Teasdale of the same name as the story (and which tends to give the story its meaning as well as lend it a certain haunting quality) it is still a marvelous visual tour-de-force by Wally Wood which most certainly does leave one breathless.

WEIRD FANTASY #18 - March-April 1953 - "Zero Hour" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Kamen

Although I'm not one of Jack Kamen's biggest fans, this story is well adapted and Jack Kamen does a bit better than average job.

WEIRD FANTASY #19 - May-June 1953 - "King of the Grey Spaces!" - 8 pages - artists: John Severin & Will Elder

In anthologies this story has been retitled "R Is For Rocket". It's a story of the future and yet the characters are very much of today. A good adaptation of a good story. Severin and Elder's art looks somewhat dated by today's standards but is still quite effective.

WEIRD FANTASY #20 - July-Aug. 1953 - "I, Rocket" - 7 pages - artists: Al Williamson & Frank Frazetta

A good adaptation of a story told by a rocketship! Artwork is rough in some panels but astoundingly beautiful in others.

WEIRD FANTASY #21 - Sept.-Oct. 1953 - "The Million Year Picnic" - 7 pages - artists: Severin & Elder

A good adaptation. Again, the style of this team looks somewhat dated now but it's still good.

WEIRD FANTASY #22 - Nov-Dec. 1953 - "The Silent Towns" - 8 pages - artist: Reed Crandall

A rather offbeat tale for Bradbury as it's a comedy! An unusual story for E.C. and one of their best adaptations from both point of views of story and art. It's one of the few adaptations that has never been reprinted and that's unfortunate.

GENEVIEVE STOOD IN THE OPEN DOOR OF THE SALON AS HE RAN ACROSS THE STREET. A BOX OF CREAM CHOCOLATES LAY OPEN IN HER ARMS. HER FINGERS, CUDDLING IT, WERE PLUMP AND PALID. HER FACE WAS ROUND AND THICK. HER LEGS WERE AS BIG AROUND AS THE STUMPS OF TREES. SHE HAD NO LIPS AT ALL AND COMPENSATED THIS BY STENCILING ON A LARGE RED, GREASY MOUTH..
SHE'D PLUCKED HER BROWS TO THIN ANTENNA LINES. HER HAIR WAS AN INDISCRIMINATE SHADE OF BROWN THAT HAD BEEN MADE AND REMADE. IT APPEARED, AS A NEST OF BIRDS. WALTER STOPPED. HIS SMILE DISSOLVED..
ARE YOU GENEVIEVE SELSOR?
ARE YOU WALTER GRIFF?
GRIFF?
WALTER GRIFF?
HIS EARS RANG
HOW DO YOU DO?
HOW DO YOU DO?
SHE PUT OUT HER HAND. HE TOOK IT. HER FINGERS WERE STICKY WITH CHOCOLATE

CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #15 - Feb.-March 1953 - "The Screaming Woman!" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Kamen

One of Bradbury's more traditional and typical stories. It's okay.

CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #17 - June-July 1953 - "Touch and Go" 8 pages - artist: Johnny Craig

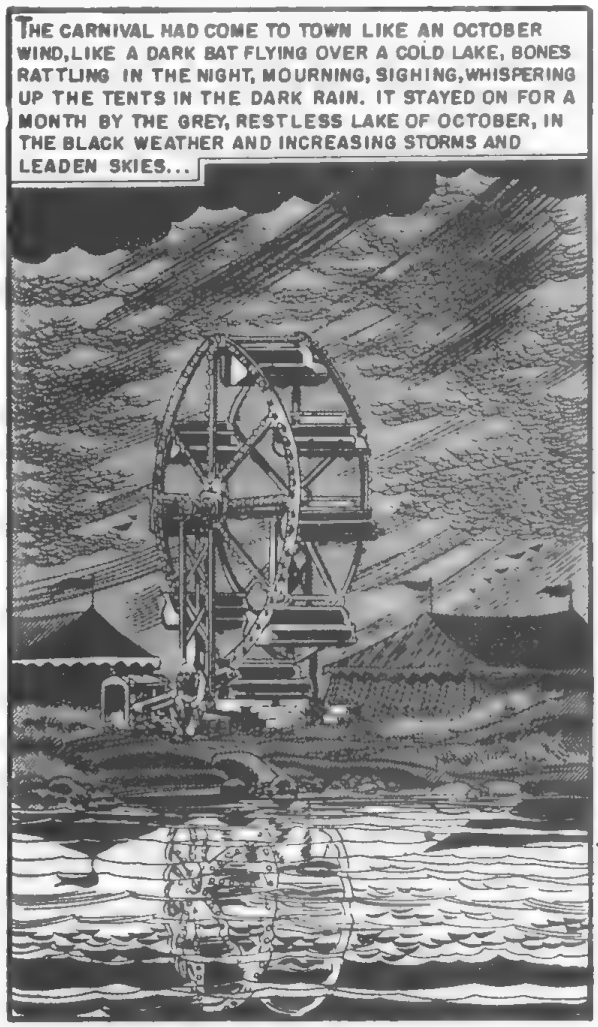
A crime story centering on the disintegration of the criminal's mind. It's different.

HAUNT OF FEAR #16 - Nov.-Dec.1952 - "The Coffin!" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Davis

A very strange little tale. More a cross between a crime suspense and a horror tale. Davis does a fine job on this bizarre tale of bizarre revenge. The last page must be given credit as being some kind of classic.

HAUNT OF FEAR #18 - March-April 1953 - "The Black Ferris!" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Davis

A very atmospheric little story. Bradbury took this story and expanded it into SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES. An excellent adaptation and good art by Davis but somehow I would have rather seen someone like Joe Orlando on this one. Still very good but has never been reprinted.


THE CARNIVAL HAD COME TO TOWN LIKE AN OCTOBER WIND, LIKE A DARK BAT FLYING OVER A COLD LAKE, BONES RATTLING IN THE NIGHT, MOURNING, SIGHING, WHISPERING UP THE TENTS IN THE DARK RAIN. IT STAYED ON FOR A MONTH BY THE GREY, RESTLESS LAKE OF OCTOBER, IN THE BLACK WEATHER AND INCREASING STORMS AND LEADEN SKIES...

WEIRD SCIENCE #17 - Jan.-Feb. 1953 - "The Long Years" - 7 pages - artist: Joe Orlando

A fine adaptation with beautiful art by Orlando from his peak period.

WEIRD SCIENCE #18 - March-April 1953 - "Mars Is Heaven!" 8 pages - artist: Wally Wood

Another excellent adaptation and Wood's art makes it a perfect one. Sheer beauty panel after panel and it's the type of story that is so convincing as to keep you constantly guessing. Truly astounding!

WEIRD SCIENCE #19 - May-June 1953 - "The One Who Waits" 7 pages - artist: Al Williamson

Probably the strangest and most thought provoking of the E.C. adaptations. Very faithful to the original and Williamson's art is very gentle and ethereal, perfectly

fitting to the story. Among the top five in quality and excellence of the E.C. adaptations.

WEIRD SCIENCE #20 - July-Aug. 1953 - "Surprise Package" - 7 pages - Jack Kamen: artist

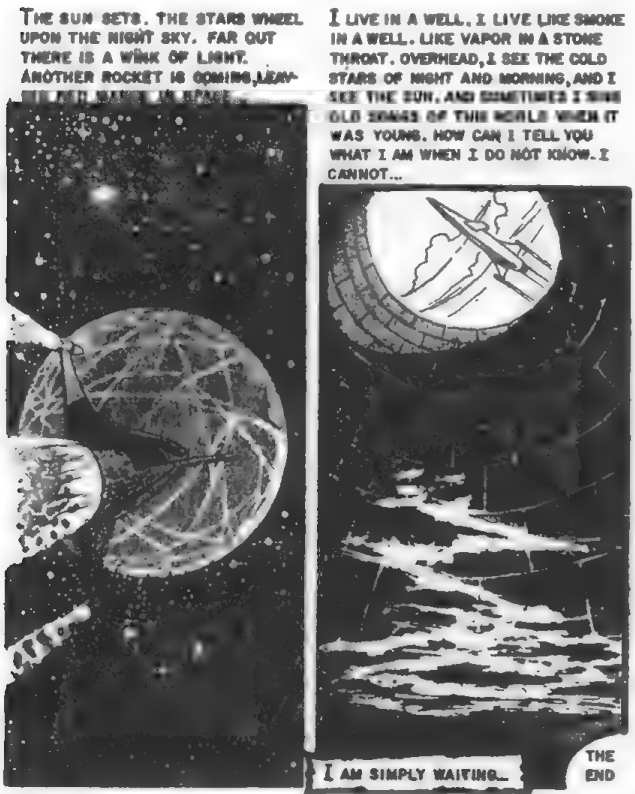
Bradbury's original title on this is "Changeling". Sort of a sequel to "Marionettes, Inc." Not bad.

WEIRD SCIENCE #21 - Sept.-Oct. 1953 - "Punishment Without Crime" - 7 pages - artist: Jack Kamen

A thought provoking story years ahead of its time. Deserved a much better artist than Kamen although his art does tend to add to the oppressive atmosphere of the story.

WEIRD SCIENCE #22 - Nov.-Dec. 1953 - "Outcast of the Stars" - 7 pages - artist: Joe Orlando

This story now is anthologized under the title "The Rocket". A fine adaptation of a story which shows a technologically advanced future in which poverty still exists. The matter-of-fact way this is treated makes it all the more startling. A gentle story about gentle people. Very good Orlando art. One of the best.


THE SUN SETS. THE STARS WHEEL UPON THE NIGHT SKY. FAR OUT THERE IS A WINK OF LIGHT. ANOTHER ROCKET IS COMING, LEAV-
I LIVE IN A WELL. I LIVE LIKE SMOKE IN A WELL. LIKE VAPOR IN A STONE THROAT. OVERHEAD, I SEE THE COLD STARS OF NIGHT AND MORNING, AND I SEE THE SUN. AND SOMETIMES I SEE OLD SHAPES OF THIS WORLD WHEN IT WAS YOUNG. HOW CAN I TELL YOU WHAT I AM WHEN I DO NOT KNOW. I CANNOT...
I AM SIMPLY WAITING...
THE END

ABOVE: THE FINAL PANELS FROM "THE ONE WHO WAITS" - WS#19

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #34 - Feb.-March 1953 - "There Was An Old Woman!" - 7 pages - artist: Graham Ingels

A curious little character study of an old woman who refuses to die, even after she's dead! Very fine Ingels art.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #36 - June-July 1953 - "The Handler" 7 pages - artist: Graham Ingels

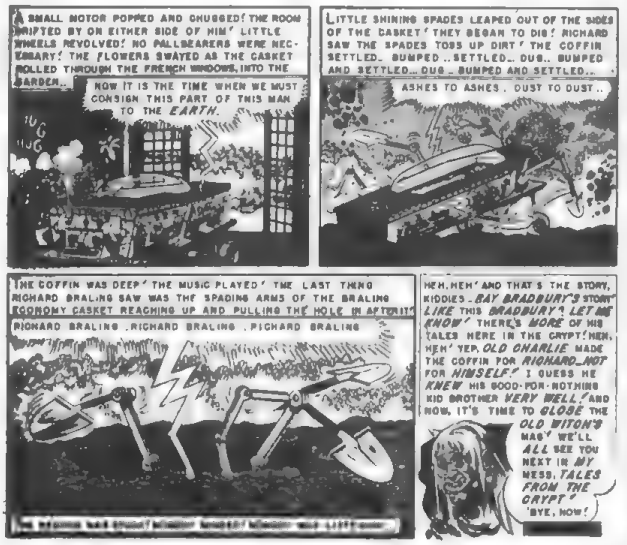
This one is so, um, "sick" that you'd swear it was written by Gaines or Feldstein. The most EC-ish story Bradbury ever wrote. An exercise in black humor which succeeds marvelously. Not for the squeemish. Graham Ingels'artwork is perfect, line for line. A good story but seldom reprinted nowadays.

SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #7 - Feb.-March 1953 - "The Small Assassin!" - 7 pages - artist: George Evans

One of the most chilling stories Bradbury ever wrote! Evans' art is perfect for this as his realism adds that extra touch of horror. The final scene's exercise in restraint (as it cuts off just before...) makes it all the more devastating! One of the best. A knockout!

SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #9 - June-July 1953 - "The October Game" - 8 pages - artist: Jack Kamen

Although many people like this story I've never been that wild about it. Kamen's art doesn't improve it any. It's a psychological horror tale. It's okay.


A SMALL MOTOR POPPED AND CHUGGED! THE ROOM SHIFTED BY ON EITHER SIDE OF HIM! LITTLE WHEELS REVOLVED! NO PALLBEARERS WERE NECESSARY! THE FLOWERS SWAYED AS THE CASKET ROLLED THROUGH THE FRENCH WINDOWS, INTO THE GARDEN...
NOW IT IS THE TIME WHEN WE MUST CONSIGN THIS PART OF THIS MAN TO THE EARTH.
LITTLE SHINING SPADES LEAPED OUT OF THE SIDES OF THE CASKET! THEY BEGAN TO DIG! RICHARD SAW THE SPADES TOSS UP DIRT! THE COFFIN SETTLED.. BUMPED..SETTLED.. DUG.. BUMPED AND SETTLED... DUG.. BUMPED AND SETTLED...
ASHES TO ASHES. DUST TO DUST..
THE COFFIN WAS DEEP! THE MUSIC PLAYED! THE LAST THING RICHARD BRALING SAW WAS THE SPADING ARMS OF THE BRALING ECONOMY CASKET REACHING UP AND PULLING THE HOLE IN AFTER IT!
RICHARD BRALING . RICHARD BRALING . RICHARD BRALING
HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S THE STORY, KIDDIES - RAY BRADBURY'S STORY LIKE THIS BRADBURY'S LET ME KNOW! THERE'S MORE OF HIS TALES HERE IN THE CRYPT! HEH, HEH! YEH. OLD CHARLIE MADE THE COFFIN FOR RICHARD...NOT FOR HIMSELF! I GUESS HE KNEW HIS GOOD-FOR-NOTHING KID BROTHER VERY WELL! AND NOW, IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE OLD WITCH'S MAG! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MESS. TALES FROM THE CRYPT! 'BYE, NOW!

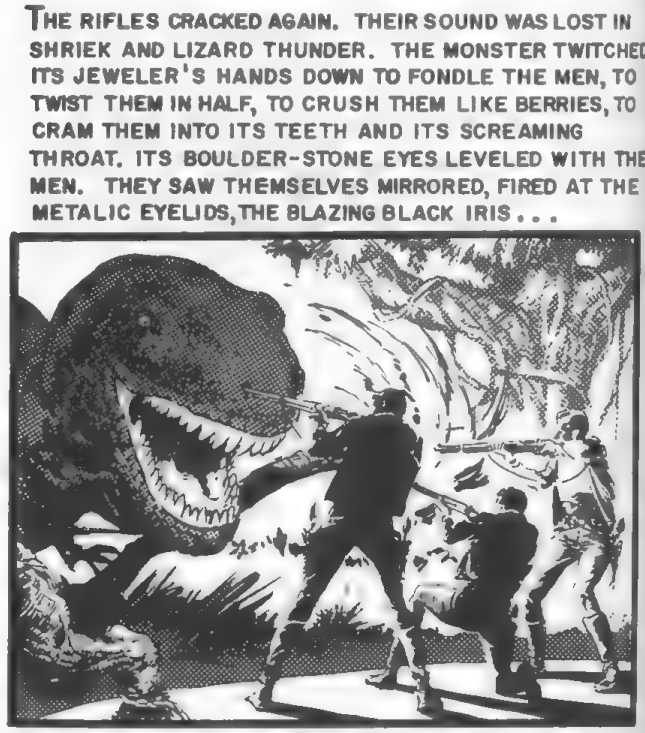
ABOVE: THE CLOSING PANELS FROM "THE COFFIN" - HOF#16

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY #23 - March 1954 - "The Flying Machine" - 6 pages - artist: Bernie Krigstein

Krigstein's unique art style does much with this story. One of Bradbury's more symbolic tales. Is widely taught and discussed in schools today. Bradbury himself said of this adaptation, "The Flying Machine is the finest single piece of art-drawing I've seen in the comics in years. Beautiful work; I was so touched and pleased..."

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY #25 - Sept. 1954 - "A Sound Of Thunder" - 7 pages - artists: Al Williamson & Angelo Torres.

Although the adaptation omits the last lines of the story (which is what the title actually referred to) it


THE RIFLES CRACKED AGAIN. THEIR SOUND WAS LOST IN SHRIEK AND LIZARD THUNDER. THE MONSTER TWITCHED ITS JEWELER'S HANDS DOWN TO FONDLE THE MEN, TO TWIST THEM IN HALF, TO CRUSH THEM LIKE BERRIES, TO CRAM THEM INTO ITS TEETH AND ITS SCREAMING THROAT. ITS BOULDER-STONE EYES LEVELED WITH THE MEN. THEY SAW THEMSELVES MIRRORED, FIRED AT THE METALIC EYELIDS, THE BLAZING BLACK IRIS . . .

ABOVE: DO I REALLY HAVE TO TELL YOU?!!

is still an effective piece. Final lines were omitted probably due to anti-violence trend pressuring the comics at that time. E.C.'s changing of the names of the presidential candidates referred to in the story so as to lampoon Truman is an interesting touch, and yet one which I've never seen discussed about in regard to this adaptation. More than any of the others, Al Feldstein seemed to be in love with Bradbury's prose in this story as his captions are often so large they practically smother the tiny space left for the art in some panels. The art is still quite appealing but it really didn't seem to have room to breathe and properly swell to life until Russ Cochran's reprint of this strip in EC PORTFOLIO FIVE, which is much much larger than the comic. [E.C. PORTFOLIO FIVE as well as I believe two of the other E.C. PORTFOLIO's, one of which reprint's "Mars Is Heaven", are still available from Russ Cochran, P.O. Box 437, W. Plains, Mo. 65775. Send him a self-addressed envelope for information].

Another aspect of E.C.'s adaptation of "A Sound Of Thunder" is that omitting the last lines is not the only change it made in the story. The original story indicated that the time travellers wore atmosphere suits of some kind which would be in keeping with their desire not to contaminate the past with anything that might change the future. But E.C. ignored this for some reason, as the panel from that story indicates.

So not all of the E.C. adaptations were perfect, but even those were still fantastic.

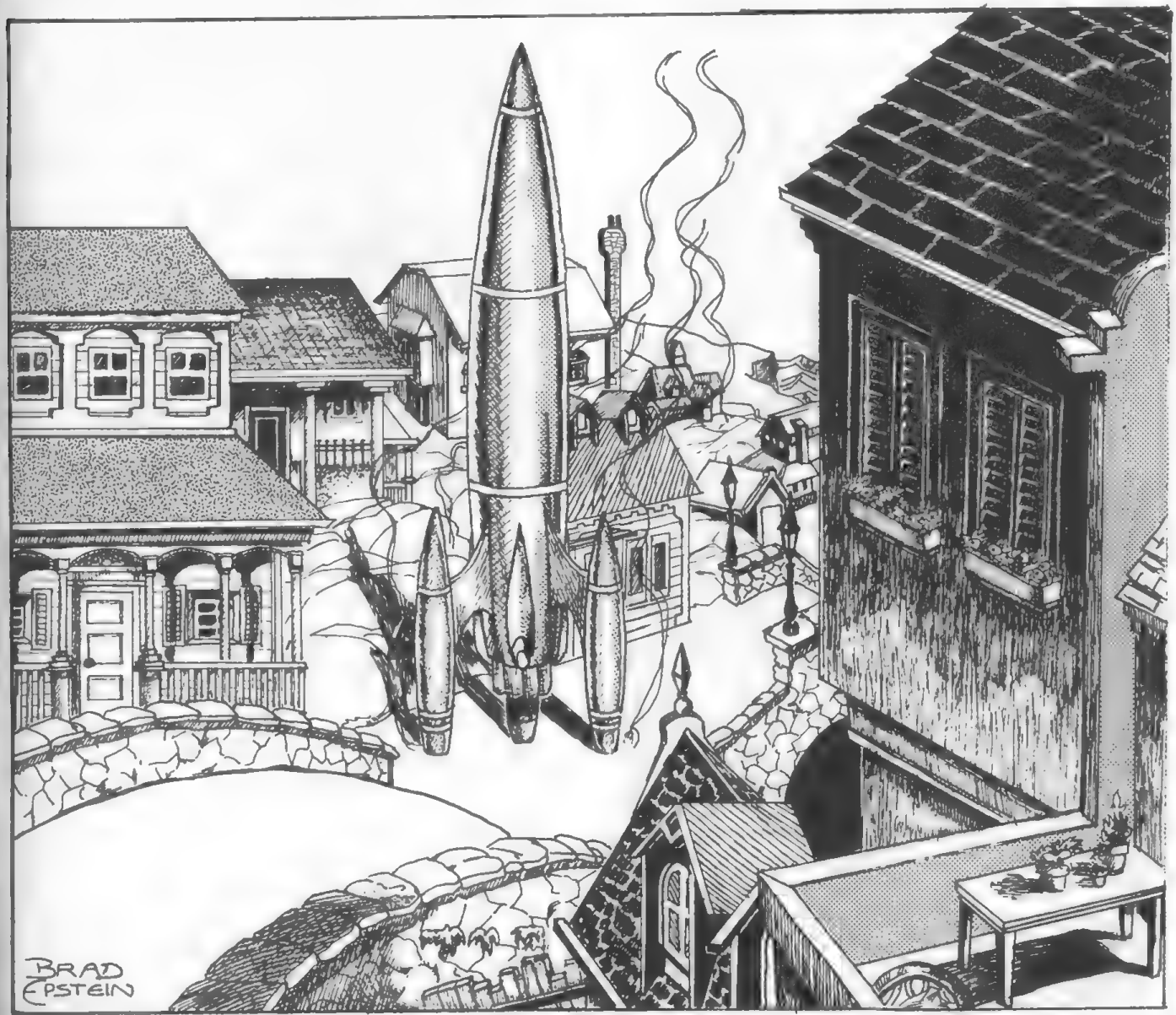
The best of E.C.'s adaptations were miles above anything else being done in comics at that time as no other publisher was that concerned then about stories that were that good or which needed to be illustrated that well. Those adaptations, by and large, still rank higher than most of what is being done in comics even today!

If I had to pick the best five of those adaptations I would choose "The Lake", "There Will Come Soft Rains", "Mars Is Heaven!", "The One Who Waits" and "A Sound Of Thunder", although these are not necessarily to be taken as order of preferance. These choices are not based so much on the perfection of the adaptation so much as they are based on the effectiveness of story combined with art, which is really the final test for the success of any comic strip.

Ray Bradbury described these stories best when in the introduction to TOMORROW MIDNIGHT he said, "We are still the greatest mystery and we shall spend several million more years trying to figure ourselves out.

"These stories then, are ways of figuring a part of myself, which means also a part of you, since we all run in the same human race together. I hope you like them."

We do, Ray, we most certainly do.



THE SOUNDS OF Bradbury

BY JAMES VAN HISE

This article will cover several of the sound recordings which have been made of Bradbury's work. Although one could easily assume that this also would include coverage of his 1940s and 50s radio adaptations, this isn't possible due to the rarity of these recordings. THE RAY BRADBURY COMPANION lists a "Beyond Tomorrow Record Club", Renaissance Radio Production, Box 377, Seymour, Connecticut which is supposed to be making available on records and tapes transcriptions of some of the Bradbury radio shows broadcast on "X Minus 1" in the fifties. "X Minus 1" adapted such classics as "Mars is Heaven" and "There Will Come Soft Rains".

There are several LP recordings of Bradbury stories but for various reasons some of them are virtually impossible to obtain.

Bradbury himself privately issued two LP records for distribution among friends. The first contains the soundtracks to two films, ICARUS MONTGOLFIER WRIGHT and AN AMERICAN JOURNEY. The first film was an animated film with illustrations by Joseph Mugnaini and screenplay credit shared by Bradbury with George Clayton Johnson. Bradbury also introduced the film in a scene done at his office. AN AMERICAN JOURNEY was the film Bradbury wrote for the Government Pavilion of the 1964 New York World's Fair. It was a short film which ran 13 1/2 minutes.

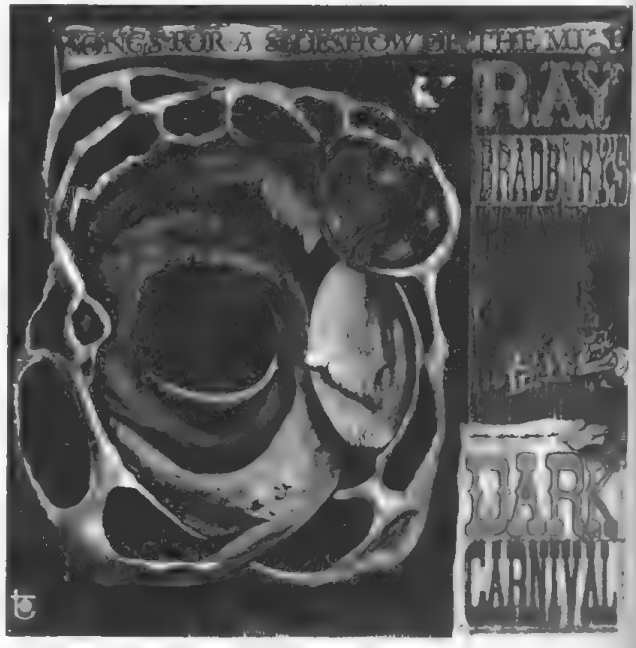
The other record Bradbury issued was CHRISTUS APOLLO, the recorded presentation of his cantata which was performed at Royce Hall, U.C.L.A. with music by Jerry Goldsmith and lyrics by Ray Bradbury.

"The Martian Chronicles" has been issued twice as a talking book for the blind. In 1958 it was issued by the American Printing House for the Blind and in 1967 from the American Foundation for the Blind. I am uncertain as to the current availability of these but I'm sure that any local library would have the information needed to contact them.

There have been two records of Bradbury material released as learning aids to students.

In 1963 a record called "Sum and Substance" interviewed Bradbury as an aid to students and in 1969 his story "The Smile" was dramatized on a record for students.

There are five records which I am going to go into a little more detail on but before I get to those I want to mention two of the most recent Bradbury recordings. These were released by Listening Library. In 1975 the LP "Bradbury Reads Bradbury" was issued and Bradbury read the following stories and included a brief introduction with each: "The Lake", "The Foghorn", "The Crowd", "The Pedestrian", "The Dwarf", "The Smile", "The Veldt", "John Huff's Leavetaking (Statues)", "Fever Dream", "Illumination", "There Will Come Soft Rains",



"A Sound Of Thunder", "The Illustrated Man" and "Marionettes, Inc." This was issued with a booklet containing the text for each story.

The other record is "Fahrenheit 451" which contains excerpts read by Bradbury together with his comments. This record was issued in 1976.

The first actual commercial LP made of recordings of Bradbury stories was "Burgess Meredith Reads Ray Bradbury" from Lively Arts in 1962. This is rather difficult to find nowadays although it sometimes turns up on radio broadcasts on Halloween night and things of that nature as this is where I first heard it about four years ago.

Meredith is an accomplished actor and he lends his talent most admirably to the readings, endowing them with vibrancy and urgency and an incredible sense of reality. His voice changes in dramatic timbre when the mood requires. When the house is dying in "There Will Come Soft Rains" he makes us feel it as though it was a living thing. He doesn't just read the story, he acts it out with his voice. When Richard Braling's friend discovers that his wife is just a robot, the longing and the lonliness in his voice is real enough to be felt.

The two stories read on this record are of course "There Will Come Soft Rains" and "Marionettes, Inc."

These same two stories turn up on two more LP albums but this time they're read by Leonard Nimoy.

The first record of the two was released in late 1975 and featured "There Will Come Soft Rains" and "Usher II". The second one was issued in very early 1976 and presented "The Veldt" and "Marionettes, Inc."

I've done enough articles and publications on Star Trek for most readers to know that I like Leonard Nimoy, and yet I didn't feel that his rendition of "There Will Come Soft Rains" contained as much depth of feeling as did Burgess Meredith's done over a dozen years before. Certain marked differences are especially found in their delivery of such lines as "Heat snapped mirrors like the first brittle winter ice". This line contains a great deal of imagery and Meredith gives it a great deal of emphasis when he reads it while Nimoy delivers it in a very matter-of-fact tone which somehow leaves it a little dry. Perhaps if I had never heard Meredith's more fiery version I would have been more satisfied with the more gentle approach taken by Nimoy on this story.

But then we come to "Usher II". This story would not allow a "soft" approach. It says too much too loudly to permit that. Nimoy does a fine job portraying Stendahl as the convincing revenge-bent fanatic. His change of voices for different characters is done very well especially the one for Garrett, the investigator from Moral Climates. In fact, he changes his voice for Garrett so completely that it is difficult to detect that it really is Nimoy doing it. It is no wonder that Tom Sutton said that he had this record playing constantly while he did his "Usher II" illustration which graces the back cover. Nimoy's reading is very atmospheric.

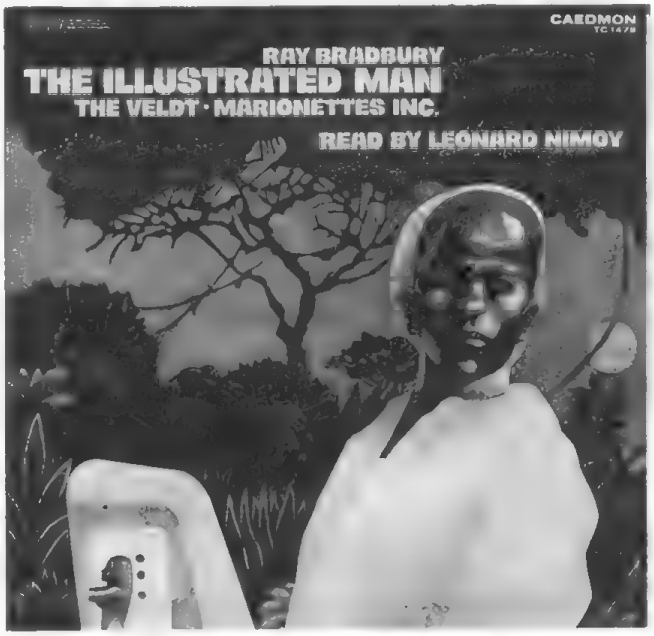
What surprises some people is when they find that these recordings are done without background sound effects. The only one I've heard which resorted to any was Burgess Meredith's reading of "Marionettes, Inc." which inserted a ticking sound when one of the characters was supposed to be listening to the mechanism in the chest of one of the robots. But these readings don't require sound effects as the words themselves conjure up the images as well as the noise just as they did when we read them in print.

"The Veldt" and "Marionettes Inc." as read by Nimoy are also very good but in that case too I found that I enjoyed Burgess Meredith's version of the latter story a little more.

Both of these records from Caedmon Records, Inc., 505 Eighth Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10018 are very good, but I personally prefer the first one with "Usher II".

Another LP of a more traditional kind is the rather rare "Songs For A Sideshow Of The Mind: Ray Bradbury's Dark Carnival" in which Bob Jacobs sings songs based on various Bradbury stories. Bradbury himself says in the liner note that there is "no convenient tag or label to pin on the kind of music you will find in this collection," and he's right. The music ranges from folk to pop and even a touch of hard rock. The most catchy tune is "October Country" which is played at the openning and the close of the album. The stories adapted into song are "The Emissary", "The Wind", "The Small Assassin" (He turns a strange, chilling story into a strange chilling song), "Homecoming", "The Illustrated Man", "The Dwarf", "The Jar" and "There Was An Old Woman". The album is released by Tower which is a subsidiary of Capitol Records. The album is no longer in release and you must count on finding it in old record stores or at conventions. It is worth having as the music is pleasant enough and Bob Jacobs is a singer and musician of some talent who carries off his performances of the various selections with ease and strength, delivering power in the presentations when it's required. The credits on this album present a couple inside jokes as the musicians are credited as being "The Autumn People" and the ringmaster is very straightforwardly listed as Cthulhu. This album is an obvious labor of love and it's nice to see that a major recording company let him do it the way he wanted to.

The final album I'll be covering is one even closer to fandom than any of the others, that being "The 1975 San Diego Comic Con" album issued by Alan Light's Dyna-Pubs. Although this record has many other people on it other than Bradbury, Ray has more time on it than any other single speaker. The album leads off with a brief segment of Bradbury's speech at the Comic Con banquet in which he discusses the attraction of comics and why everyone is there at the convention. He talks of the fans' "Love of high romance, the love of life itself" as to why they're all so attracted to comics. The other Bradbury segment is a healthy slice from his individual talk given a couple days prior to the banquet. This was the first time I'd ever heard Bradbury speak live and it left an especially strong impression on me as he is one of the most interesting speakers one could ever hope to hear. The segments presented on the record are good as Bradbury talks about his play which failed and a marvelous story which no one would buy. But it omits some fantastic childhood remembrances which were the height of the talk. Still it's an experience worth having.



An Interview with Ray Bradbury

Ray Bradbury, author of The Martian Chronicles, Dandelion Wine, Zen and the Art of Writing, *etc., is perhaps the most widely read science fiction writer in the world today.*

AIID: What motivates you to write?

Bradbury: The best motivation there is — love. You get excited about something. You start as a child, falling in love with all kinds of things that seem crazy to other people. I fell in love with motion pictures when I was three and Edgar Allan Poe books when I was eight. Then I fell in love with Buck Rogers and science fiction and started collecting comic books.

When I was twelve I began to write my own sequels to Edgar Rice Burroughs books and draw my own comic strips. I exploded all over the place. I've always been an explosive, loving person. When I fall in love with a thing, I have to do it. I have to own it by doing it. That is the only way you own anything. People go around with pieces of paper which say "I own things" but the only way to own anything is to do it. Then those things are locked into yourself.

You train yourself over a period of years and the better you train yourself the better you do and the more you love. It is what I call a cracker jack cycle. The old saying on a box of cracker jacks is "The more you eat the more you want." That is true for love and for love in writing, acting or painting or any of the arts or athletics. If you never try, if you never *do*, you never have any chance of falling in love. Love develops out of doing or experience. I was lucky in that I was one of those manic children who immediately had to do something about his love. I went into writing.

AIID: You go a lot by feelings.

Bradbury: I go totally by feelings. I never make intellectual decisions about anything. I'm totally against that sort of nonsense because it is purely rationalizing. You give yourself a reason for doing something that doesn't fit with the facts by lying to yourself. You use your intellect to lie. Most good things happen on an intuitive level, anyway.

AIID: Does active thinking play much of a role in your writing?

Bradbury: Thought is not a way of life; living is a way of life. A bird is beautiful because it is functioning in its own sphere and element. It is at ease because it doesn't have to think about what it is doing. The beautiful writer is one who has learned his craft so well that he takes off and flies like a bird and just enjoys the exhilaration of flying. If there is anything of beauty in my writing it is because of my ability to fly well without thinking about it.

AIID: What does it feel like to fly?

Bradbury: You go into a fever actually. It's explosive, delightful and surprising. I've found that when I'm having a slow day all I have to do is linger within striking distance of the typewriter and something comes. Sometimes I go out for long walks or dip into books, but eventually there is an explosion of some sort. Your heart is beating faster and your glands are pumping more adrenaline into your system. And it's delicious. It's like a good run around the track. It is a joyful experience.

AIID: I've noticed that science fiction deals with basic themes such as "What is the purpose of life?" and "Where is mankind going?" which are often left untouched by contemporary writing. Is there any reason for this?

Bradbury: I think people are all basically philosophers with a small "p". Science fiction is really philosophical and theological writing dealing with man's relationships to himself, to his machines, and to God. A hell of a lot of science fiction has moved in the theological direction the last 30 years and it is happening more all the time. I have certainly done much in that area.

Some people say that religion is a fraud. The trappings of the religion can be fraudulent but the message at the center is what we are curious about. What is the secret of creation? I have an awe of the universe and I want to express it, so naturally I was drawn to this kind of writing.

AIID: What motivates man to explore space?

Bradbury: I think it is a God-oriented concept, although we may not think so. If we did not feel a kinship with the universe, I don't think we would be doing it at all.

AIID: You often use the theme of man meeting with other beings during his space explorations, encountering differences in reality.

Bradbury: When we get 7 or 8 light years out, we are going to be meeting creatures that will be human but won't look human at all. It will suddenly be a problem of aesthetics. They will share with us the basic truth that we are sun creatures. Our blood teems with sunlight, and every piece of food we take into it is a fragment of solar energy that is broken down and utilized by our bodies. If you could take a fabulous x-ray of the 10 billion blood cells within our body you'd find a burning sun at the center of each one.

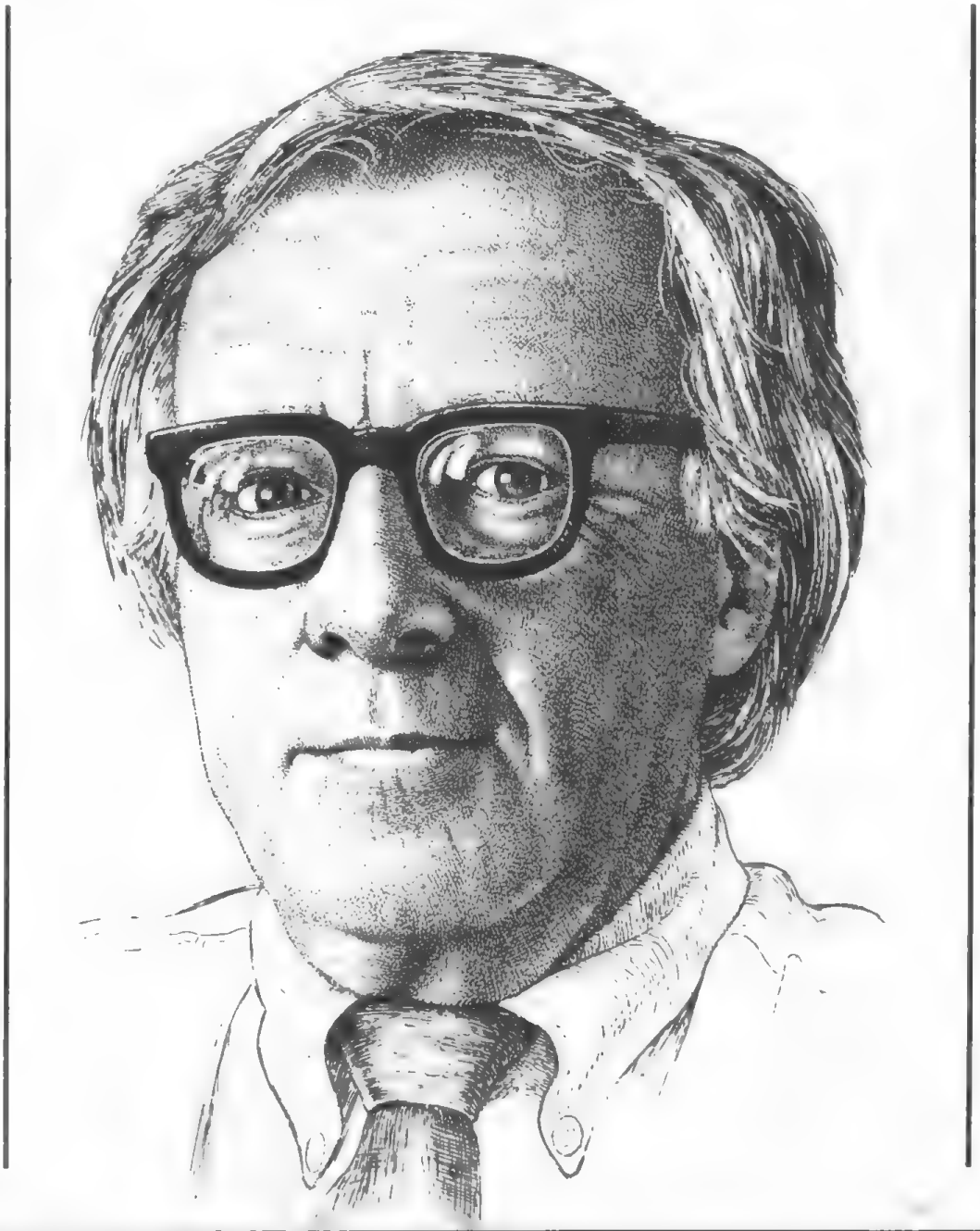
What we will share with these creatures is the concept of humanity, and humanity is love. Love is what we will share between worlds. We will share an awe of the universe, a respect for the Godhead and a respect for life, regardless of what shape it takes. Love is the criterion we will use to tell if another creature is human or not. I wrote a story called "The Fire Balloons" in which priests apply this criterion to the blue fires, beings who take the form of light.

AIID: Where did you get the idea for having the people be balls of light?

Bradbury: It is an old idea in science fiction and Bernard Shaw spoke of it in his philosophical essays. He was always talking about the life-force and a possible future when man will shed his flesh and become the pure essence. This will mean shedding some of the more paradoxical things which bother us the most. We are sort of put upon by our flesh, aren't we? There are times when we would love to be pure essence and be able to move through the universe and look at all the worlds and explore them as an essence and not as a thing which has to feed itself.

I never thought I would get into some of these questions when I was younger, but the older I get, the more fascinated I am. I am trying to use each moment of *now* as best I can.

One metaphor I have used is that life is like a golden thread. It rushes at me and I try to hold it without burning my hands and without stopping it, but still shaping it as it passes through me to eternity. So my writing is to take the thread, weave it into patterns and freeze it on paper.



2701 Maplewood Dr., Champaign, Ill 61820

A CREATION of consummate complexity, radiating mystery and feminine allure, she haunts many a male memory. John Steinbeck wrote: "When my grandchildren speak of their sugarplum eroticisms, I can say, 'You see? This is how it was in my day. This Dragon Lady, with the figure of a debutante (if debutantes have figures) was one of your old man's girl friends.'"

The Dragon Lady is a unique bit of characterization in the history of comic strips. She is, of course, beautiful. And she is the first of a long line of Milton Caniff's femme fatales about whom the air of mystery swirls like early morning mist.

There is nothing unique about beauty and mystery in comic strip women. But Caniff gave to his characterization of this stock character a profound twist: the Dragon Lady is hard and seemingly unscrupulous, a princess of sorts (her real name is Lai Choi San, "Mountain of Wealth") who fills a hereditary masculine role so thoroughly that her minions ignore her obvious feminine attractions and call her always "Master."

To this already formidable creation, Caniff added two final and masterfully delicate touches: a note of doubt about her unscrupulousness and the poignant suggestion (ever so slight) that perhaps DL would rather be loved of men than lead them.

The doubt about her hardness is particularly evident in DL's later appearances in TERRY. Although the Dragon Lady claims for her deeds only the most self-serving of motives, the effect of many of her intrigues is to do a good turn for the cause of humanity.

What's more, we actually see her occasionally performing some act of kindness (which she is likely to do covertly, as if almost ashamed of it). Is she really humane beneath that snarling albeit beautiful exterior? Should we believe her claims to unscrupulous self-seeking? Or are those claims only a mask, covering her real humanity in order to preserve her necessarily unyielding image as a leader of men?

And does she love Pat Ryan? Or, later, Terry? Or is she, in those scenes in which she seems to reveal to them a secret love, merely indulging herself during an idle moment in yet another exercise of power? Having proved her power as a leader of men, is she now just trying to prove her equally potent strength in the more traditional role of a woman? Or does she really regret the role she must play and secretly long to be enfolded in some strong hero's arms?

Only about seemingly real people can we ask such questions. Perhaps we'll never know the answers for sure. Just as we can never know for sure about many people we meet in our own lives. But we'll believe what we choose to believe.

This sort of ambiguity about a character is possible only when the personality drawn is complex--as well as fully and realistically rounded with many subtle strokes. With such strokes, Caniff did more than make the Dragon Lady live. He gave to his woman of mystery a psychological depth that underscores the mysteriousness of her circumstances with the puzzle of her personality. And in the ambivalence of our judgment about her (a necessarily male judgment with yours truly) are the outlines of archetypal male fears and longings about women in general.

With the appearance last spring of the Nostalgia Press reprint volume, ENTER THE DRAGON LADY, some of the mystery about DL has begun to dissipate --those aspects of the mystery that arise from our unfamiliarity with her comic strip history. (The rest of the mystery, rooted in her personality, will remain through any number of reprintings of the strip. Happily.)

In ENTER THE DRAGON LADY, we learn some of DL's background. A half-caste Chinese, she began early to scheme her way to power. Posing as a dance-hall girl, she seduced a British naval surgeon into joining her smuggling ring, and when the authorities broke it up, she left the good doctor holding the bag. Disgraced, he joins an outlaw army, and, in this volume, when he encounters DL again, he empties a pistol into her in a fit of vengeful rage.

The NP book leaves the matter there, but we know DL isn't mortally wounded. We know

she'll turn up again.

Although the title of the book implies that this is DL's first appearance in the strip, there is in the first encounter between her and Pat Ryan a familiar Caniff plotting ploy: mysterious references to a mutual past.

Pat sees through DL's initial disguise, suggesting with his remarks that he has met her before. Pat is also incognito, but when DL captures him and removes his moustache, she too says things that imply that they've met before.

This plotting technique, the veiled reference to past events, is one Caniff uses often. His more popular characters are always reappearing, and with each appearance, the other characters make references to their past adventures together. The effect is to add to the mystery of the Orient by suggesting that a special shadowy network of relationships, past and present, knit selected individuals together amid the otherwise shifting milieu of a teeming alien population. In DL's case, such maneuvers enhance the mystery of her personality.

But in ENTER THE DRAGON LADY there is yet another reason for references to a past encounter. Despite the implications of the book's title, this is not the first appearance of the Dragon Lady in TERRY. The book reprints daily and Sunday strips from 1936, but when TERRY began in 1934, the Sunday strips told a different story than did the dailies. And DL made her first appearance in the separate Sunday continuity.

The Nostalgia Press book acknowledges this fact, but doesn't tell us when the Sundays with DL's first adventure appeared. And Maurice Horn's WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMICS is equally vague, saying (with annoying imprecision) only that the Sundays began "a few weeks later" than the daily strip. It was to lay to rest this aspect of DL's mystery that I finally read the microfilmed CHICAGO TRIBUNE for the first few months of TERRY.

THE FIRST Sunday TERRY was December 16, 1934. And in the last panel of that strip, DL first appears. Terry and Pat are aboard a steamer that is raided by pirates off the China coast. The duo resist capture, but they are finally overpowered, and as they stand helpless, the pirate chief puts in her appearance.

"So! It is the Amelican gentleman who resists so brashly," says the Dragon Lady. "I am not su'plised."

"Luvva Pete!" Terry says, "we're captured by a woman!"

By the third Sunday, DL will lose her phony American version of a Chinese accent. But on December 23, she continues in the same vein.

"So!" she says, "my Melican fliends! You do not seem so honored to be taken plisoner by Lai Choi San!"

Pat's heard of her--"the most notorious woman pirate in China," he says. And he and Terry try to escape as they are transferred from the steamer to DL's junk, but she stops them short by training a machine gun on them. On December 30, she gloats:

"You see, my fine-feathered frien's," she says (this time with little trace of an accent) "it is useless to resist the relentless machine gun."

Reportedly modeled after Joan Crawford, DL looks more like Heddy Lamar as she leans over the side of her ship, suitably attired in kimono but with a holstered pistol for jewelry.

She makes prisoners of Terry and Pat, but she shares with almost every other female who comes into the strip a romantic interest in Pat Ryan. It is one of the early TERRY's cliches that Pat is irresistable to women. And DL succumbs to his attractions as quickly as any of the others in this, their first encounter.

The Dragon Lady --Dec. 23, 1934

Inviting him to her cabin, DL awaits in her slinkiest gown, reclining on a couch, cigarette glowing at the end of a long holder.

"Come here, handsome one," she says. And then: "Why are you so cool to me? I've been told I am not without charm! But you ignore me!"

Pat (who will later prove more glib) stammers like a schoolboy when DL proposes that they become partners and "together rule the China Sea."

Terry breaks it up by barging in to announce--cannily, seemingly in innocence--that he just learned from one of the crew how to pronounce in Chinese the names of Pat's wife and his ten kids.

End of romantic interlude.

By the next week, DL has decided to work on Terry, to eliminate him by way of clearing her way to Pat. First she butters him up, inviting him to tea. Terry thinks maybe she's not so bad after all. Then she makes it clear that she's poisoned the tea she wants him to drink.

BUT SHE'S foiled in her scheme by an explosion that knocks her unconscious. The explosion ushers in an attack on her ship by a rival pirate, Fang, whose crew begins to pound DL's junk to shreds.

Pat, now in chains below decks, is threatened by both fire and water as the junk breaks apart, but the resourceful Terry pries him free of his manacles, and the two emerge on deck as Fang and his minions come aboard.

"Come on, Pat," shouts Terry, "we'll have to fight our way clear! Rush through 'em, Pat! We may be able to beat it in the excitement!"

"It's anybody's fight!" Pat yells, and he plunges into the melay. To no avail; Fang captures them all--Pat, Terry, DL, and her crew.

"Looks as if we're out of the frying pan into the fire, eh, Terry," says Pat.

"Jus' one long diet of boiled rice," Terry grumbles.

Thrown into a squalid cell below decks, Terry and Pat overhear Fang next door, threatening the Dragon Lady with torture in order to get her to devulge the secret location of her treasure trove. He also says he'll use Terry and Pat as bait in his next piracy raid.

ON FEBRUARY 10, faced by a common dilemma, the three prisoners team up. DL gives Terry her mirror on the condition that he and Pat promise to help her get away from the authorities if they're rescued. On the next Sunday, Fang puts Terry and Pat on deck, telling them to wave at a passing British ship to lure it near enough to be boarded. Pat surreptiously signals the ship with DL's mirror; the British call the US Navy to the rescue.

Fang, rightly guessing that Pat warned off the prey, promises to torture Pat and Terry as punishment. He hoists them up into his ship's rigging to serve as targets for his crew's shooting practice.

But on February 24, a US Navy patrol boat steams into sight.

"This'll be a dog fight!" says Terry. "Let's get down from here! I crave action!"

Grabbing a dangling rope, Terry swings onto the deck: "Whoopie--here comes ol thunderbolt Terry! Pull in your ears, boys!"

Landing on one crew member, Terry snatches up the man's sword and turns to confront other members of the crew in the best Errol Flynn fashion.

"Now step up, you soft boiled eggs," he snarls, "I ain't the three musketeers, but I give a darn good imitation! On guard! I aims to whittle you down to my size!"

Tough talk for a youngster, however plucky he may be. But the Navy comes aboard before Terry can do more than threaten. Fang has barricaded himself in the junk's after cabin, tying DL to a mast in front of the door. The US sailors won't shoot their way by a woman for fear of hitting her, so Terry goes over the stern rail of the ship to lob tear gas into the after cabin.

Seeing Terry at the window, Fang springs out after him, chasing him up the rigging. But the nimble Terry turns a handy block and tackle into a weapon, knocking Fang to the deck with a well-placed swing. Meanwhile, the Navy has subdued the remaining pirates.

En route to the Navy cutter on March 10, Terry observes that the Navy will turn the pirates over to the Chinese authorities. Overhearing his

remarks, the rescued Dragon Lady accuses Terry and Pat of reneging on their deal to help her evade the law. "You liars," she jeers.

But when the Navy commander questions Terry about DL, Terry --standing next to her--says evasively that she "was captured an' taken aboard Fang's ship at the same time we were."

As the commander leaves, Pat turns to DL, saying, "You see, Miss--we are not exactly liars."

DL is abashed. "I am not used to apologies," she says, "but I am grateful. You have saved me from being hanged! I do not forget."

After she leaves, Pat wonders if they handled the situation properly. "Maybe we're a couple o' saps to let her get away," he says. "She's a dangerous gal!"

"Yeah," Terry says, "but we kept our word! An' somehow I gotta hunch we're not gonna regret it."

Prophetic words--and they

NEWS FROM NOSTALGIA PRESS--The Noel Sickles' SCORCHY SMITH volume is ready for the printer, and THE FLEISCHER STORY (a $12.50 book, with over 300 illustrations dealing with the cartoon studio that produced films with such stars as Betty Boop, Popeye, and Superman) is now available. Another new book now available is SECRET AGENT X-9 by Dashiell Hammett and Alex Raymond; paperbound, 176 pages--$8.95; five stories (with some work on one by Austin Briggs). The POPEYE, MANDRAKE, and PHANTOM books will soon be reprinted in less costly paperback format, and preparation of the next volumes of PRINCE VALIANT and FLASH GORDON (in color) goes forward. Speaking of PV, Nostalgia will bring out all seven of the Hastings House books next year in hardbound (black & white illos with text). ENTER THE DRAGON LADY and MEET BURMA are $6.95 each. All books can be ordered directly from NP, P.O. Box 293, Franklin Square, NY, NY 11010; add 50¢ postage for each book ordered, plus 50¢ to your total order for handling.

indicate that Caniff already had planned the Dragon Lady's encore appearance even as he concluded the first adventure she shared with Pat and Terry.

This adventure clears up a number of the more shadowy aspects of the history of DL's relationship to Terry and Pat. When she extends a helping hand to them in future episodes, she does so partly in payment of her debt of gratitude. Pat and Terry helped her in their initial encounter much the same as they were to help Burma when they first meet her. But DL's treatment of the two stems in part from her affection for Pat, too.

Interestingly, Lai Choi San's famous nom d'guere is introduced casually in the strip. On January 6, 1935, Pat refers to her as "the dragon lady" in much the same way as he might say "the pirate lady" (or, later, "Homicide Hattie"). Despite the seeming off-handedness of this christening, DL's crew members are calling her "the Dragon Lady" immediately after Pat first mentions her name--but he's the first to use it.

ASIDE FROM THE light the first adventure sheds on DL, the episode is interesting because of Terry's prominent role in it.

In this adventure, Terry takes on the role of the adventure story hero in virtually all its aspects save the romantic. The initiative for nearly every action is his, and he leads the way into every battle scene.

By contrast, Pat Ryan is just a pretty boy who gets the romantic scenes but nothing else. To some extent, Terry's actions can be expected of a kid with his courage and imagination. But when he threatens to whittle a bunch of pirates down to his size with a cutlass, his credulity is strained beyond the breaking point. Terry may be as much a soldier of fortune as Pat Ryan, but he is, after all, still a youngster, and a youngster looks just a trifle preposterous in the role of a fully grown swashbuckler.

Caniff must have thought so too, because in most of the rest of TERRY, Pat takes on the really physical heroics,

... AND NOW THAT I'VE MADE MY SPEECH I THINK I'LL BE GOOD AND RUDE AND TAKE A SNOOZE! SOOTHE ME WITH A LULLABY, BABY!—FOR TOMORROW YOU'LL PROBABLY CUT MY THROAT...
MILTON CANIFF

The Dragon Lady: 1936

Theory of COMICS

2nd PRINCIPLE: Genre determines criteria for evaluation.

A COMIC STRIP is a verbal and visual narrative in which neither words nor pictures are quite satisfactory alone without the other. One measure of a strip's excellence is the extent to which the sense of the words is dependent upon the pictures. And vice versa.

Humorous comic strips can be evaluated by this yardstick very easily: the strips in which both the pictures and the words are essential in telling the joke are the strips that are, strictly speaking, "better" than those in which the verbal joke makes sense without the pictures. Or vice versa.

But this criterion is only one of several that must be brought to bear on a given comic strip when evaluating it. Many excellent strips meet this criterion infrequently: their excellence derives from some other aspect of the art of the comic strip. To come at these other aspects, we must consider the different genre into which comics fall.

The two major genre are gag strips (a joke a day) and continuity strips (a story told in daily installments). Comic books fall roughly into the same classifications but without the installment distinction; thus, there are humorous comic books and serious ones.

Some strips spill into both categories. Billy DeBeck's BARNEY GOOGLE, for instance, told a story by installment--often ending a day's installment with a punchline. But most strips confine themselves neatly to one category or the other.

Continuity strips can be further classified into two sub-genre: the soap opera and the adventure strip. The adventure strip is distinguished from the soaper chiefly in its concern with exotic settings and high-risk physical danger as opposed to the "everyday" setting and psychological trauma of the soap opera.

GAG STRIPS TEND to be rendered in "cartoony" styles: anatomy, for example, is caricatured rather than illustrated realistically. Most continuity strips strive for graphic realism.

Evaluation of gag strips involves fewer variables than the other types. A joke is either successful--funny--or it isn't. And the extent of verbal/visual interdependence is easily ascertained. The other genre are more complicated creations.

In the adventure strip, the continuity strip genre finds its most gripping expression. The adventure strip exemplifies most vividly the basic ingredient of the continuity genre: suspense. When illustrators invaded the comic pages during the thirties, their realistic artwork made the suspense even keener by making it seem more real.

NEXT: Suspense and realism as criteria for evaluation of continuity strips.

NAMEDROPPING & memory testing

FRANK WEBB

REMEMBER FRANK WEBB? Aside from the several correspondence courses in cartooning that flourished in the twenties and thirties, there were dozens of books that undertook teaching people to draw "the funnies." Walter T. Foster did several of them. But the first one I remember was Webb's book, "How to Make Faces," which I got hold of in the late forties. During the thirties, Webb drew a syndicated cartoon feature with the same title. These drawings, however, come from the booklet that grew out of the feature. The booklet concentrates on making faces from numbers and letters --like B, D, L, S, and Z, shown here.

Great for parlor games--and it stimulates the imagination, too. Try it on the rest of the alphabet, and before long, you'll be able to make a cartoon from any kind of squiggle.

and Terry is more appropriately cast as a plucky kidwith imaginative plans for action who mostly assists in their execution, leaving the heavier physical stuff to his broad-shouldered comrade. Seldomagain will Terry take the lead role in such doings--until he's grown a bit older and heftier.

The relationship that eventually emerged--Pat, the handsome and courageous male lead, resourceful and strong enough to be capable of any challenge to an adventurer, accompanied and often assisted by Terry, the gutsy protege whose agile imagination makes the real difference between failure and success in many a scrape--strikes a more believable balance of ingredients.

The duo's Oriental compatriot and the provider of comic relief, Connie, doesn't appear at all in the first Sunday adventure--although Terry and Pat hurry to meet him when the Navy cutter brings them back ashore for the beginning of their next adventure.

The famous Sickles-designed TERRY logo doesn't appear in the first three-months' Sundays either.

Stylistically, the art is crisp and clean penwork, showing none of the innovative impressionism that will soon be evident in both daily and Sunday strips.

And that, fans and friends, is how the Dragon Lady first came into TERRY AND THE PIRATES. I've satisfied my own long-standing curiosity; hopefully, it was yours as well.

—HARV

The University of Miami NOVA Science Fiction Club Presents:

The NOVA S.F. Review

THIS NEW COLUMN WILL BE DEVOTED STRICTLY TO REVIEWING SCIENCE FICTION BOOKS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AT BOOK STORES. THE REVIEWERS ARE MEMBERS OF THE "NOVA SCIENCE FICTION CLUB" OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI.

* * * *

THE IMMORTAL OF WORLD'S END by Lin Carter - Daw Books

This is the third book of Carter's Gondwane epic, set 700 million years in the Earth's future. By this time, the continents of the Earth have moved back together into on supercontinent called Gondwane the Great. Several vertebrate groups have developed intelligent members, and mankind has diversified greatly so that there are few true Homo sapiens left.

The story is a continuation of the earlier Gondwane books, and follows the further adventures of Ganelon Silvermane (an android superman) and his companion, Grrff (a Tigerman; an intelligent descendant of present day felines). Presently they are involved with defending various cities/castles from the Ximchak hordes, a group of perfect villains about whom hardly a kindly word may be said. The Ximchaks have already conquered Gompland, and are now attempting to encroach on their neighbors.

It's a good idea for a book, and there are several particularly delightful phenomena. Among these are: a thinking mobile city whose fondest dream is to settle down in one place with a normal population, a sphinx-like animal named Ishgadara (one of the best characters of the story), and two companions, Palensus Choy (a sorcerer, and the "Immortal" of the title), and Ollub Vetch (a scientist), who constantly argue the merits of science vs. magic. The presence of many different intelligent races is also a definite "plus". However, there are many drawbacks. The story seems rather piecemeal, and doesn't stand on its own too well; we seem to enter in the middle of one story and leave in the midst of another, and half hit a few more along the way. There is not a lot of attention to detail here; a long description is repeated word for word, and other information is left out, to be added as afterthoughts later. There is also a distressing nonchalance about killing the barbarians. Very matter-of-factly several hundred Ximchaks are ground to a bloody pulp by giant fans, and a few thousand more squashed under a flying castle. Ganelon can fight anyone and come out unscathed. Okay, so he's a superman and we want the good guys to win, but really! Four beings overcoming several hundred?

All in all, the book makes interesting light reading, but it could have been better executed. Some personages are well characterized, but all too few. Much more could have been done with the basic story line--the potential is here, but it's not used.

-- Liz Baldwin

INTERSTELLAR EMPIRE by John Brunner - Daw Books

John Brunner's book turns out to be a collection of three early stories from the '60s and '50s. Early John Brunner reminds me a lot of early Heinlein--let's say when Heinlein was about two years of age. My great expectations of material from the man who produced the classic Stand On Zanzibar quickly fell to sub-mud level as I attempted to wallow through these case-history examples of mediocrity.

His basic idea was interesting: an interstellar empire has fallen and all transportation through space is solely dependant upon immortal ships created by an extinct alien race. Since the controls of the ships are simple and self-repairing, men have absolutely no idea how they work. Thus, you have a whole galaxy packed with planets relying on fifteenth-century technology for everyday living, but easy access to each other thanks to the ships. One would imagine a skilled writer concentrating on the fascinating plot implications here, such as characters in a seemingly medieval setting abruptly taking off in a spacecraft or a protagonist determined to unlock the secrets of the mysterious technology guiding his vessel. There is excellent construction material here, but Brunner uses it to make bedpans. Instead of emphasizing the paradoxes he simply allows for them, creating Conan-ish sword-and-boredomy epics. The results are characters moving in and out of contradictory situations about as comfortably as John Wayne wavering between war movies and Felix the Cat cartoons, planets being treated as though they were no larger than storybook kingdoms of Boola-Schmoola, and overall situations about as probable as an honest candidate for President. With one exception of a few tense scenes and some realistic personality portrayal there is no indication that this is the author who would someday write masterpieces of science-fiction/social-commentary.

Hence, I see no reason why Brunner dug these things up, let alone stick them back in publication. As any mortician can tell you, some things are better left buried.

-- Buz Stearns

THE FLORIANS by Brian Stableford - Daw Books

Brian Stableford, an otherwise capable writer, has hit the public with a new book - The Florians. The story is, supposedly, centered around the mission of the space ship Daedalus. This mission is to recontact and help the Earth colonies throughout the galaxies. The type of help they offer to these colonies is to help them solve problems of adaptation within their new life-systems. These colonies have been out of touch with Earth, in some cases, as long as two centuries. If then with this new information, the Daedalus mission seems a little unbelievable, well, you've hit upon the reaction of the colonists as well as discovered the trouble in this weak plot.

But the trouble is only beginning. All the main characters, with the exception of a fourteen year old girl, are adults. The author seems to become a little confused on this point. Often, the characters are so involved in being quip and dishing out sarcastic remarks, that the only one concerned with the purpose of the Daedalus (remember it had a purpose) is the fourteen year old. Stableford doesn't even believe in the plot enough to develop it beyond a series of jokes and caustic comments. The narrator/biologist for the Daedalus team, Alexis Alexander, between cute wisecracks, gets sidetracked long enough to make some professional assessment of the situation on the planet Floria. But not long enough to lend the expedition or the book any purpose.

Since The Florians is really only the story of the

Daedalus landing on Floria, somebody can look forward to a sequel or sequels about other Daedalus missions. Perhaps some new jokes even. The book has enough technical information sprinkled about to make this exciting science fiction for fifteen year olds. But, for the rest of the sci-fi public, this is pretty weak stuff.

-- Donna Salyer

DARKOVER LANDFALL by Marion Zimmer Bradley - Daw Books

I can only recommend this to Bradley fans who want to know more about the background of Darkover. Landfall is an interesting story about the adaptations the crew and passengers of a crashed ship have to make when they discover they can't make repairs. There are the usual problems with unknown plants and animals, but the main problem is the strange Ghost Wind that brings madness linked with ESP capabilities. The character development of the people faced with the necessity of colonizing an unknown planet and dealing with the Ghost Wind is very good.

The reason I recommend Landfall only to fans is because of the faults contained in the story. The main one comes from the fact that this is intended to be the first book of a series. The result in the story is a novella padded with things, like the two sets of aliens on the planet, which are not important to the story. Presumably these things are going to be explained in coming books. It's subtler than Edgar Rice Burroughs' cliffhanger endings but still annoying. Some of the minor faults in the story tended to upset the suspension of disbelief needed to enjoy SF. Darkover's sun is a red stay, yet it lights up Darkover's four moons in four different colors. One of the aliens is described as having colorless hair, yet under a red sun his hair would appear red. There's also the exploration party that goes out without taking a radio along. On a planet where there is always fog, rain or snow coming on, the party plans to communicate with main base via flashing lights.

-- Jeffry Castle

2150 A.D. by Thea Alexander - Warner Books

Besides the overworked concept of using the date as the title of the book, 2150 A.D. is a very interesting and unique novel. Briefly it is the story of a Vietnam War veteran who goes to sleep one night in 1976 and awakens in a utopian society of the future (Guess the date?). He finds that he has been brought there by his "twin soul" who turns out to be a beautiful girl named Lea Nine, for the purpose of reuniting their souls. But before he can accomplish this and live permanently in 2150 A.D., he must learn the concepts that they base their society on and demonstrate a specific level of efficiency in them. The catch is that he has only 3 months to do it or he will permanently lose the chance to become "one" with Lea and be stuck back in 1976. Through a series of successful and unsuccessful experiences, he does learn up to a point, but in the end he must choose to make the ultimate sacrifice in a last attempt to become a member of 2150 A.D.

The plot, although by no means original, serves very well as a vehicle for the author's purpose. The strength of the book lies in the mind challenging philosophy that the world of 2150 A.D. (The Macro Society) is based upon. It is called the Macro Philosophy and it is not just something which was made up for the purpose of this book, but rather it is a real, dynamic part of the consciousness movement which has swept over this country. In fact, Thea Alexander, the author, guides the activities of a "Macro Society Workshop" in Arizona where discussion, study and interaction groups explore the concepts of the Macro philosophy.

2150 A.D. then is not merely a novel about a utopian society, but it is actually a prediction of a possible future for mankind. There have been plenty of novels that gave us a very pessimistic look at what might lie ahead, but 2150 A.D. shows us a very real future where a "Utopian" society is workable. In the back of this book there is a section that fully explains the Macro Philosophy and actually contains the blueprints for the development of the Macro Society.

2150 A.D. was first published in October 1971 by Macro Books and it received very limited distribution. It has been rewritten, updated to 1976 and released by Warner Books who is giving it a big promotional push. The newer version contains more explanation of the Macro Philosophy than the earlier one, thus slowing down an already slow paced plot. For science fiction fans looking for action and excitement--look elsewhere, but for those seeking mind expanding philosophical concepts, this book is exactly what you have been waiting for. We are in a renaissance age in which the teachings of all the great spiritual leaders are being rediscovered and 2150 A.D. will do a good deal to help spread the word. Anyone who reads this book and understands the concepts in it, knows without a doubt that the argument that "Utopia would be boring as hell" is a total myth.

-- Mike McKenney

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH by Walter Tevis - Avon Books

In order to discuss this book one can't help but also refer to the film as well as most people who have recently read this book may have been inspired or driven to do so by the film. In my case it was the latter. I really didn't care for the film, and in fact thought it was one of the worst I've ever seen. And yet through the murky script and muddled direction I could see that there had once been a story in place of the aimless plot presented on the screen. I had noticed in the credits that it was based on a novel and I could not imagine a novel written as badly as was the film. I was right. When I saw the paperback I picked it up and read the last few paragraphs to compare. The scene is virtually the same as in the film except that it contains one vital element which forms the basic (among many) flaws of the film. Depth of characterization. That one scene in the book showed more character empathy than was evidenced in the entire film. I couldn't care about the characters in the movie, but I could care about the characters in the book even though they were the same ones, because Walter Tevis knows how to write far better than Nicolas Roeg knows how to direct

The personalities of the characters in the book are warped in the film with the exception of Thomas Newton who, in the person of David Bowie in the film, emerges as a protagonist just as scarred and broken by events in one as the other. It's just that the film tells us little of his motives and background whereas the book fills us in. Bowie was the only saving grace of the film for he came across as the only one who really understood what he was doing and who he was.

Another way the film distorts the perspectives of the story is that the book is a tale of the defeat of Thomas Newton by the forces which make mankind mankind, while the film sidetracked and diverted this into an attempt to make some cloudy and uncertain commentary on capitalism (Is it really necessary for British directors to allow themselves to become so obsessed with this even when they are unable to make a probing commentary that truly strikes at the heart of the issue?).

The novel's strength is the depth with which everyone is explored and portrayed, and the way everything is carefully thought out and explained. Where the film is a forgettable dud; the book is a memorable experience.

-- James Van Hise

CRITIQUE

10. Superb
9. Excellent
8. Very Good
7. Good
6. Fairly Good
5. Fair
4. Tolerable
3. Poor
2. Very Poor
1. Worthless

CRITIQUE is basicly a review column, but we will not specificly recommend that you buy or not buy a particular item. We will review each item to the best of our ability and let each reader take it from there. We will be reviewing almost any item (fanzines, prozines, records, portfolios, tapes, posters, or just anything of general interest) with one exception. We will not be doing any SFCA publications for obvious reasons. CRITIQUE offers a readership of nearly two thousand and CRITIQUE will also offer the publisher of any item we review up to one hundred words of free space to rebut his review, if he chooses to do so, providing his review is less than an "8" rating. All rebuttals to appear in the next column must be in our hands at least five days before the ad deadline of the next RB&CC or they will be run in the following issue. If you have an item you would like reviewed, send a copy of it to: CRITIQUE, 1445 N.W. 180th TERR., MIAMI, FLORIDA 33169

A few things to remember: Where UNDERGROUNDS are concerned, you must be 18 or older to order them. All fanzines reviewed are 8 1/2 x 11 with offset printing and wraparound binding unless otherwise noted. From time to time there may be a publication over which two of our reviewers have wide disagreement and in which case two reviews of the same book will be run in the interest of fairness.

A FINAL NOTE: The only reason for CRITIQUE is as a service to fandom. If you appreciate what we are trying to do then let us know. Your support can be shown in numerous ways: If you order an item because of our review then please mention CRITIQUE in your order, and of course the RB&CC would appreciate your subscription and advertising support. Naturally, your comments are welcomed.

JAMES VAN HISE / EDITOR

BEYOND TIME AND AGAIN By George Metzger - $10.00 - 48 pages (8 3/4 x 11 1/4) - Hardcover with full color dust jacket - Published by Kyle & Wheary, 724 Fourteenth Street, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92648

Although the underground comics are all but dead now, when they thrived one of their most popular contributors was George Metzger and what was so amazing about this was that he achieved popularity through pure raw talent and never relied on the exploitation of sex or violence. More than any other artist, Metzger showed the direction undergrounds should have taken, instead of contemplating their own navels self-destructively.

The strip handsomely reprinted in this hardcover book originally appeared in an underground newspaper THE SAN JOSE REDEYE and was later reprinted with some variations in another such paper THE STAFF. I still remember how THE STAFF used this strip to experiment with color such as on the installments where they would use blue at the top graduating into red at the bottom while leaving the word balloons in black with tremendous results! But in this more durable printing we must settle for the more prosaic black and white.

The dustjacket done new for this book is a wrap-around illustration by Metzger making very somber yet effective use of color.

The strip itself is a fantasy of the remote future of Earth and the story of Seth of Comstock, a possessor of magic of some ability who seeks to gain more. In the process he encounters some of the denizens of this future world and at the same time gains knowledge of powers which he little dreamed he possessed! The tale weaves from one future Earth to another and back again, all the time displaying Metzger's marvelous storytelling abilities.

In the first appearance of this strip, the last panel which has a wizard looking at the reader in surprise had a caption added which said, "Well, I guess that's the end of the strip!" That caption is not present here (nor was it in the reprint in THE STAFF) and I think it added a nice touch with its presence.

This book was originally being discussed for publication some three years ago but then all news of it ceased until it suddenly appeared in July with virtually no fanfare at all, and fanfare is certainly what it deserves.

RATING 10 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE BEST OF COMICOLOGY - $1.50 - 40 pages - Published by Doug Fratz, 1810 Metzerott Road #14 Adelphi, Maryland 20783

If I'd had a fanzine of long standing, one that I'd published quite a few issues of, and one that was pretty well liked and respected, I would have published a collection of the best material I'd garnered over the years. But I think I would have done a job that was a wee bit better than the one Doug Fratz did. I have nothing against Doug Fratz. I've always thought of him as a fan who was constructively active in fandom. I liked whatever image of him had formed in my mind.

The only problem we have here is that "The Best of COMICOLOGY" isn't quite as slick as I like fanzines to be. I'm a great admirer of the ANOMALY's, the WITZEND's, the ART & STORY's, the SQUA TRONT's and the GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINES. I see RBCC as a slick fanzine. But not many fans have the kind of money needed to produce fanzines of this calibre.

I like zines that are well layed-out, that are well printed without a lot of wash-outs, that contain as few typos as possible, and most of all, hold my interest throughout.

Not many of the articles in "The Best of COMICOLOGY" were of great interest to me. Out of the seven text features, I only found two interesting enough to read. The others were either super-fannish or super boring.

The most interesting articles were: an interview with Jim Shooter (conducted in 1969), and a satirical article entitled "How To $ucceed In Comics Fandom". The accompanying illos by Bill Rotsler, though sketchy, added a certain touch that I liked as well.

All that's left is the artwork. There are some pieces that are rather nice, and others that aren't so nice. The nice ones are by Robert Kline (cover), Vaughn Bode' (reprint of an old cover and a centerspread), and Tom Sutton (reprint of a past cover, and probably the most finished piece in the book, other than Kline).

The remaining art is a plethora of sketchbook scribblings and whatnot. If the ads for this zine list art by Jeff Jones, Mike Kaluta, Berni Wrightson, John Fantucchio, Jack Gaughan and Dave Cockrum, you'll find all these artists inside, but I assure you, you'll be greatly disappointed.

For those who like "faan" zines, this might be a minor treat. I personally had somewhat of a good time first time through the book. But half the fun was derived from thinking about what I could be reviewing

instead (You should see the pile of crudzines we've got to wade through).

RATING 6 / MARK BURBEY

"THE GREEN PRINCESS" by Boris - $3.00 - Poster 17" x 22" - Published by The Mylos Press, P.O. Box 5246, Spokane, Wa. 99205

Posters, posters, posters, posters, posters, posters, we are surrounded by an army of posters! Everything Frazetta ever painted posters. Everything Wrightson is going to draw from now on posters. Howard the Duck posters that aren't really Howard the Duck but really are anyway. Why is there such an incredible glut of posters on the market? If you bought every poster being offered you'd have enough to wallpaper your house. As beautiful as many of these posters are, I pass them up simply because I have nothing to do with them, no place to put them. And yet they continue to appear as if from some endless cornucopia.

And now when it looks like they're running out of Frazetta to print as posters, or perhaps because of how well the Frazetta posters sell (they are the ones that really started it all) they turn out Frazetta imitator's posters such as this one.

Boris has recently been doing Frazetta imitation covers for dustjackets. They may imitate the style, but they fail to capture the talent, the verve, of the original.

This one has a short-haired barbarian fighting a group of hooded priests and along side of him is a topless green woman who is helping him. In the background a nude woman hangs chained to the wall.

Technically the painting is very well rendered. Boris is definitely a man of very real talent. But aesthetically it is not that captivating and has more of the effect of a cover of one of the men's sweat magazines which often feature non-fantasy scenes which are quite similar in aspect. It's a pretty good try but lacks the effect of the successful imitation.

RATING 6 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF MARVEL #1 - $1.00 - 24 pages, tabloid size on newsprint - Published by Irjax Enterprises, 13016 St. Charles Pl., Rockville, Maryland 20853

This is one of those fanzines which exists in its presently semi-successful form more through blind luck than any real talent on the part of the editorial staff.

It has a good frontispiece of "Warduck" (a duck version of Warlock) by Steve Leialoha and a fine drawing of Howard the Duck as a barbarian on the front cover. The reason for my previous statement is that these two pieces of art are the only two redeeming features of the entire issue, the remainder being incredibly fanish and shallow.

Now, there is basically nothing wrong with an article being fanish if it is done well, but these aren't. I tire of seeing Marvel zines which treat their subject as if all it deserves is a superficial treatment. I'm also sick to death of Howard the Duck. He was interesting at first but later issues, mainly those after Brunner quit, have shown that Marvel doesn't really know what to do with him, just that everybody seems nuts about him. This issue was apparently conceived during the early throes of duck-mania for beyond the covers there is a three page interview with Howard (What? Another one?) which is rather obvious in approach and contains four photos with a drawing of Howard added to look as if he was really there with the interviewer. The problem with these is not just that the drawings are only moderately successful, but that Howard is drawn twice the size he really is in proportion to humans. Talk about overlooking the obvious!

There's also a two page section of Marvel news with cover repros, a full page drawing of "The Thunder Duck" (*sigh*...), a drawing of Howard with Donald Duck and a typical short article on Howard the Duck by Doug Fratz. Doug Fratz also contributes a full page article to lead off the magazine, a column which he titles "Bovine Excrement" (What a classy name!) Yes, Doug, I get the joke. No, Doug, I don't think it's clever.

There follows a couple comic strips which are so poor they're not even worth describing.

This is followed by eight and one-half pages of ads.

If this zine were taken as a true indication, one would think that perhaps the wonderful world of Marvel isn't so wonderful after all.

RATING 4 / JAMES VAN HISE

COMICS LAND PORTFOLIO 1 "VICTOR DE LA FUENTE" - $3.00 by surface mail, $5.00 air mail - 28 pages, 9 1/2 x 13 1/2 - Published by Nino Bernazzali, Via G. Modugno, 5 - 16156 Pegli Genova Italy

Before you look at the word Italy and run away, this zine is completely in English. This is rather surprising but they must feel that there is a large English speaking market to be tapped. The translations are obviously done by someone to whom English is a second language for although it is understandable the verbiage is rather clipped and in spots too precise and unrealistic whereas in others words are oddly arranged such as to read again being used instead of reread and things of that nature. It's still done pretty well, though.

This publication spotlights the work of Victor De La Fuente, a Spanish artist whose work is very popular in Europe. There is a biography of him, some various strips including a "Haxtur" strip which seems to be incomplete, and several pages of full page drawings of barbarians, and women and battles, all of which are really beautiful.

The front cover takes one of the full page drawings which appears inside and adds full color and does it very well I might add.

The back cover is a strange little comic strip by artist Robert Gigi of two people taking off their clothes on a stage. Perhaps this artist will be spotlighted in the second issue but it isn't explained.

My overall impression of this is much the same impression I have of most of the Spanish artists whose work I've seen, that being that their single illustrations are very fine work, but their strips tend to be sparse on the use of contrasting areas of black and white to distinguish the action from the background and keep them from running together, although De La Fuente is less guilty of this than most.

For those who wish to expand their artistic horizons and perhaps discover the secret influences on many of the comic artists currently on the American scene (and these guys are very aware of their European counterparts) these types of publications are most valuable and enlightening.

RATING 8 / JAMES VAN HISE

CINEFANTASTIQUE Vol. 5 #2 - $4.00, 4/$10.00 - 48 pages - Published by Fred Clarke, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park, Ill. 60303 [AVAILABLE FROM THE S.F.C.A. FOR $3.00 + 25¢ POSTAGE]

I love reviewing this magazine, especially issues such as this one. An average issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE (CFQ from now on in reference) is better than any of the science fiction, horror & fantasy film mags generally found on

the newsstand now or ever, but a great issue of CFQ, such as this one is a dream come true!

Nineteen pages, including the full color painting on the front cover by Vincent DiFate, are devoted to LOGAN'S RUN. There are also several full color stills and pre-production drawings included with the many many other stills and drawings in this section. CFQ takes an exhaustive look at the film, its history regarding previous filmings which were planned, discussions with the authors of the original novel upon which it was based, as well as the people involved in the actual production of the film so as to examine exactly why it turned out as it did, a multimillion dollar, colorfully extravagant waste of talent and energy. The answers it arrives at are, unfortunately, not surprising.

The other major article is a seven page spread on "The Special Effects Of FLESH GORDON" which includes four pages of beautiful full color stills (including the back cover of the magazine). The article goes into great depth on who was really responsible for what in the film and why so many names (such as George Barr to list just one) were left off the screen credits. The reasons don't reflect very highly on the film's producers. The article at last gives credit where credit was overdue.

There is also news on coming films as well as reviews of current films such as AT THE EARTH'S CORE, THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH, THE OMEN and more.

This is the premiere magazine in the genre of the imaginative film. It cannot be praised too highly.

RATING 10 / JAMES VAN HISE

STAR TREK MAGAZINE #3 - $1.50 - 34 pages - Published by The St. Pete Chapter of S.T.F.F., P.O. Box 10354, St. Pete, Fl. 33733

This is a FANzine in the truest sense of the term. In their own words, "All work (except printing) on STAR TREK MAGAZINE is done on a volunteer basis by and for Star Trek and science fiction fans." Naturally the contents and quality reflect this fact.

The cover of this issue is a very bad example of adding color to try and help sell the magazine. It was done by someone who obviously does not have the necessary skills to produce decent color work. The cover contains a black and white photo of the Enterprise (very poor in quality) with red & blue added very sparingly and off register over it. It is such a waste of the extra colors, they should have printed it in black ink only and saved the extra money. Color printing is expensive.

The contents page is very well done though. They used a photo of the bridge of the Enterprise, and with the helmsmen looking on, they placed the index on the main viewing screen. It is very imaginative and "shockingly good" after seeing the cover.

This issue is a special Scotty issue - but all that means is that they have a short article about him with photos (it is really a waste of space) and a few other stills spread throughout the magazine. But there is a good article on the second season of SPACE: 1999 accompanied by some nice stills. Also in this issue is an article on TREKON 76 with a mysterious missing photo of the costume contest winner; several fiction stories of which only half are worth taking the time to read; news of new sci-fi movies and television shows; several articles reprinted from other sources-mostly concerning the naming of the United States Space Shuttle; and various other goodies including a puzzle page.

For a FANzine, STAR TREK MAGAZINE is good, God knows I've seen much worse! But it just can't compare to the many professionally produced, slick, Star Trek magazines around today.

RATING 5 / MIKE McKENNEY

* * * *

FANTASCENE #2 - $2.00 + 35¢ postage - 40 pages - Published by Fantascene Productions, 1701 Broadview Ln. #103, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48105

With PHOTON gone, it looked as if the only really good sf filmzine fandom had left was CINEFANTASTIQUE, and as great as it is, it's still only published four times a year, leaving one with a hunger for more. FANTASCENE made a modest showing with its first issue several months ago, showing a promising beginning but limited by covering many films which didn't really seem to be worth the effort. But with the second issue great strides have been taken in both format and content. The successor to PHOTON lives, and it's called FANTASCENE!

This issue leads off with a fine black, white and orange cover of the Id monster from FORBIDDEN PLANET.

The lead feature is a six page interview with Jim Danforth and unlike the interview in INFINITY recently which suffered due to the interviewer's lack of knowledge of his work and thus lack of interesting questions this one is all one could hope for and more. I know a great deal about Danforth's work and yet even I was treated to a lot I hadn't known. The interview includes fifteen stills of his work in various films, etc and is all beautifully handled.

Interviews with Jack Rabin, Irving Block and Gene Warren explore their contributions to special effects in films in the fifties which range from good movies (ROCKETSHIP X-M) to great movies (FORBIDDEN PLANET) and give recognition to these men who have been largely ignored by genre enthusiasts.

Nine pages are devoted to the second in a series of very in-depth articles on George Pal's WAR OF THE WORLDS. It contains lots of unique photos and information.

This issue also has some short film reviews and three pages of film news, with advance stills, covering things I hadn't heard about elsewhere, and doing it well too.

Subscriptions are not yet available but it is hoped they will get together enough to publish on a regular basis (it is published on an "unscheduled basis") as fans tend to support a fine enterprise which they know they can count on.

RATING 9 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE RAY BRADBURY COMPANION - $28.50 - 350 pages - 7 1/4 x 10 1/4 (Hardcover in slipcase) - Published by Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226

This book, edited by William F. Nolan, is described by the book itself as "A Life and Career History, Photolog, and Comprehensive Checklist of Writings". What it contains is virtually everything you might want to know about Ray Bradbury including a complete checklist of his work which goes up through 1973. The Photolog is a series of photos of Bradbury spanning his life from childhood through the 1970's and it's excellent. The book is also indexed. It even has a section on writings about Ray Bradbury which gives you an idea of how completely it handles the subjects involved. There are also illustrations from stories reprinted, old newspaper articles written by him in the 1930s, leaflets, bookcovers, and more. It's a visual as well as a factual experience. Casual admirers will find it more than they wanted to know, while those who admire the man even beyond his writings will find it more than they ever dreamed for.

RATING 10 / JAMES VAN HISE

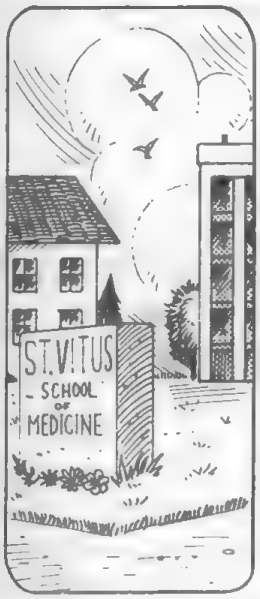
XENOPHILE #26 - $1.00 - 84 pages (newsprint interior & heavy covers) - Published by Xenophile, Box 9660, St. Louis, Mo. 63122

This is primarily an adzine but it has ten pages plus the cover devoted to Bradbury including an index to his work which picks up where THE COMPANION (above) leaves off.

RATING 8 / JAMES VAN HISE

The Pertwillaby Papers

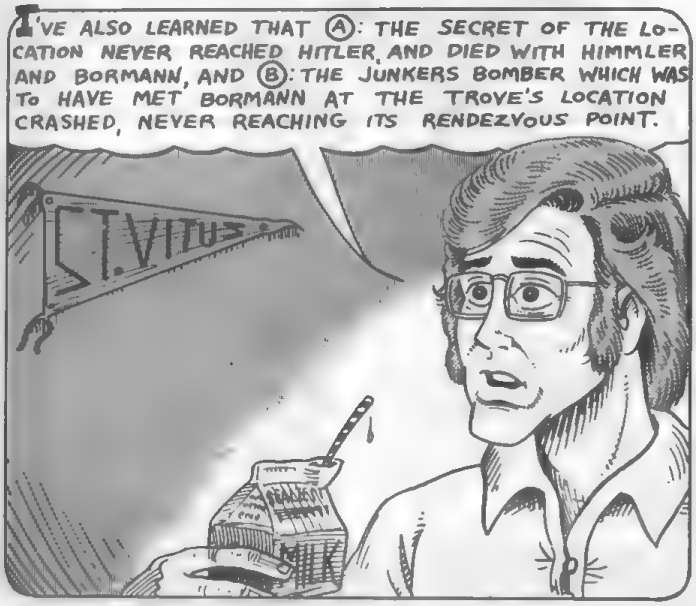
EPISODE #129:



LANCE PERTWILLABY VISITING FREDDIE KEGG, CAMPUS BON VIVANT AND MAKE-OUT KING, ON FRATERNITY ROW!?? BOY HOWDY – THIS MUST BE BIG! SO YOU SAY THAT THIS BUNCH OF ARTISTS HID THE NORTH POLE IN A JUNKY AIRPLANE, RIGHTO?

NO... NO, FREDDIE. LET ME EXPLAIN AGAIN: IN THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE 3rd REICH, ADOLF HITLER HAD HEINRICH HIMMLER APPROPRIATE HERMAN GOERING'S VAST COLLECTION OF ART TREASURES LOOTED FROM MUSEUMS & CHURCHES THROUGHOUT EUROPE; MARTIN BORMANN SOMEHOW (I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS) PLACED THE ART IN A HIDDEN CACHE AT THE NORTH POLE FOR POSSIBLE RETRIEVAL SHOULD NAZI GERMANY EVER HAPPEN TO FALL ON LEAN TIMES.

I'VE ALSO LEARNED THAT (A): THE SECRET OF THE LOCATION NEVER REACHED HITLER, AND DIED WITH HIMMLER AND BORMANN, AND (B): THE JUNKERS BOMBER WHICH WAS TO HAVE MET BORMANN AT THE TROVE'S LOCATION CRASHED, NEVER REACHING ITS RENDEZVOUS POINT.



I'VE SEEN CONCLUSIVE PROOF OF ALL THIS... YET I MANAGED TO LOSE ALL THAT PROOF. CONSEQUENTLY, THE U.N. AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL GROUPS HAVE REBUFFED MY DECIDEDLY INCREDIBLE STORY, AND I'VE BEEN PUBLICLY DISCLAIMED AS A PUBLICITY-SEEKING CHARLATAN.

YEAH BOY – THINGS ARE TUFF ALL OVER!

the WORLD GUARDIAN
LOST ART TREASURE STORY CALLED HOAX
AUTHORITIES CALL LEAP FROM EMPIRE STATE BLDG. TYPICAL PUBLICITY STUNT

1. 2.

YES... I'M SURE THEY ARE. AT ANY RATE, I WAS ABLE TO PERSUADE PRES. MORPHOUS TO EXTEND TO ME A SMALL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANT TO FINANCE A POLAR EXPEDITION... ON THE STIPULATION THAT I BRING HIM BACK A SOUVENIR PENQUIN EGG. IN DESPERATION, I'M AFRAID I OPTED TO WAIT UNTIL THE ADVENT OF MY RETURN TO INFORM HIM THAT PENQUINS ARE EXCLUSIVELY INDIGENOUS TO THE SOUTH POLE.

BUT FREDDIE, I'VE COME TO REQUEST YOUR ASSISTANCE. I NEED AT LEAST ONE MORE TRUSTWORTHY COMPATRIOT TO ACCOMPANY FEATHER & MYSELF ON OUR POLAR QUEST.

WELL, FEED ME BEANS & CALL ME A PROPANE TANK, THAT SOUNDS LIKE A REAL BLAST! COUNT ME IN LANCE-BOY!

PIZZA BLACK

I ETA TATER

NATURALLY YOU'D WANT THE CAMPUS SUPER-STAR TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR GOOSE CHASE ...THAT WAY IT COULDN'T BE A TOTAL LOSS! BESIDES, THIS WILL GIVE ME EVEN MORE INTERESTING PARTY STORIES TO TELL THE CHICKS... IF SUCH WERE POSSIBLE.

"TAKE CH-*"... WELL, WHATEVER... AS LONG AS YOU'RE COMING. WE'LL MAKE PLANS TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.

CITY SANITATION DEPT.

HERR ROATCH- IT ZEEMS DAT PERTVILLABY ISS ABOUT TO LEAF FOR DER POLAR REGIONS. VE HAFF PROKRASTINATED TOO LONG IN OUR OWN DEPARTURE TO DER PROVERBIAL ICEY VASTES; IT ISS TIME TO BOOK PASSAGE TO NORTHERN KLIMES. HAFF YOU YOUR CHECKBOOK?

DEPT OF SANITATION

CITY SANITATION

YES, YES, I HAVE MY CHECKBOOK. THIS ENTIRE AFFAIR SEEMS AS THOUGH IT WILL BE DREADFULLY TEDIOUS & STRENUOUS. BUT PATER WILL BE OVERJOYED TO OBTAIN THAT ART COLLECTION. AS YOU SAY, IT WILL ALL BELONG TO WHOEVER FINDS IT, DUE TO THE EXPIRATION OF THE STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS ON BOTH STOLEN AND LOST MERCHANDISE.

?!

CITY SANITATION

VELL, KOME ALONG DEN. VE VILL FOLLOW HERR PERTVILLABY KLOSELY, AND SEIZE ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO ELIMINATE HIM-*... ER... HIS... UH... CHANCES TO FIND THE LOST CACHE!

SANITATION DEPT.

LATER THAT SAME DAY... MUCH LATER THAT SAME DAY... IN FACT, EARLY THE NEXT DAY:

HMMMM...

C-26 WORLD GUAR

FREAK ACCIDENT AT SIDESHOW

DRINK BURP COLA

DINO DE LAURENTIS TO FILM REMAKE OF "KONG"

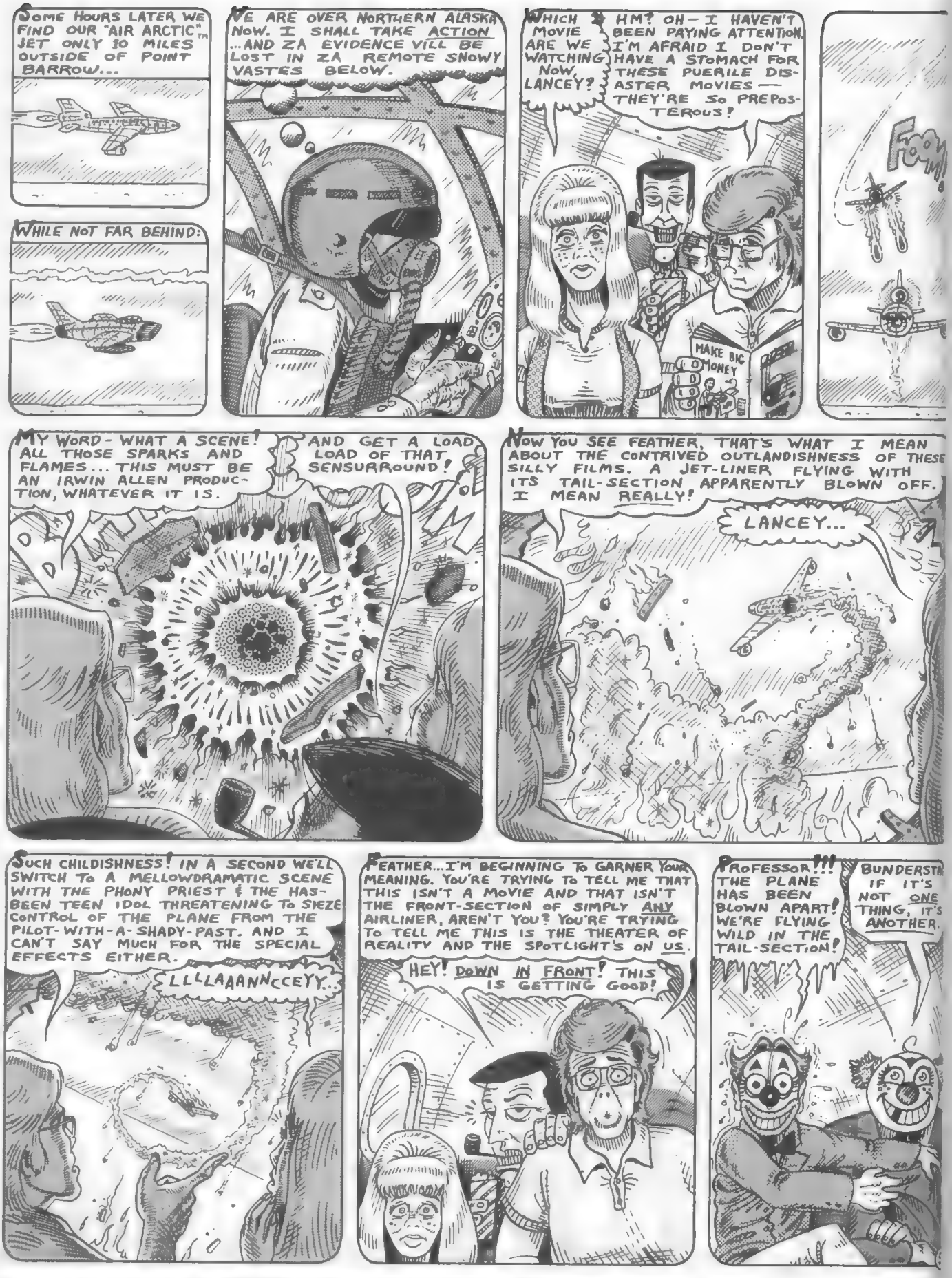
LANSE PERDWILABIE TO LEAVE TODAY ON SEARCH OF ALLEGED NAZI LOOT

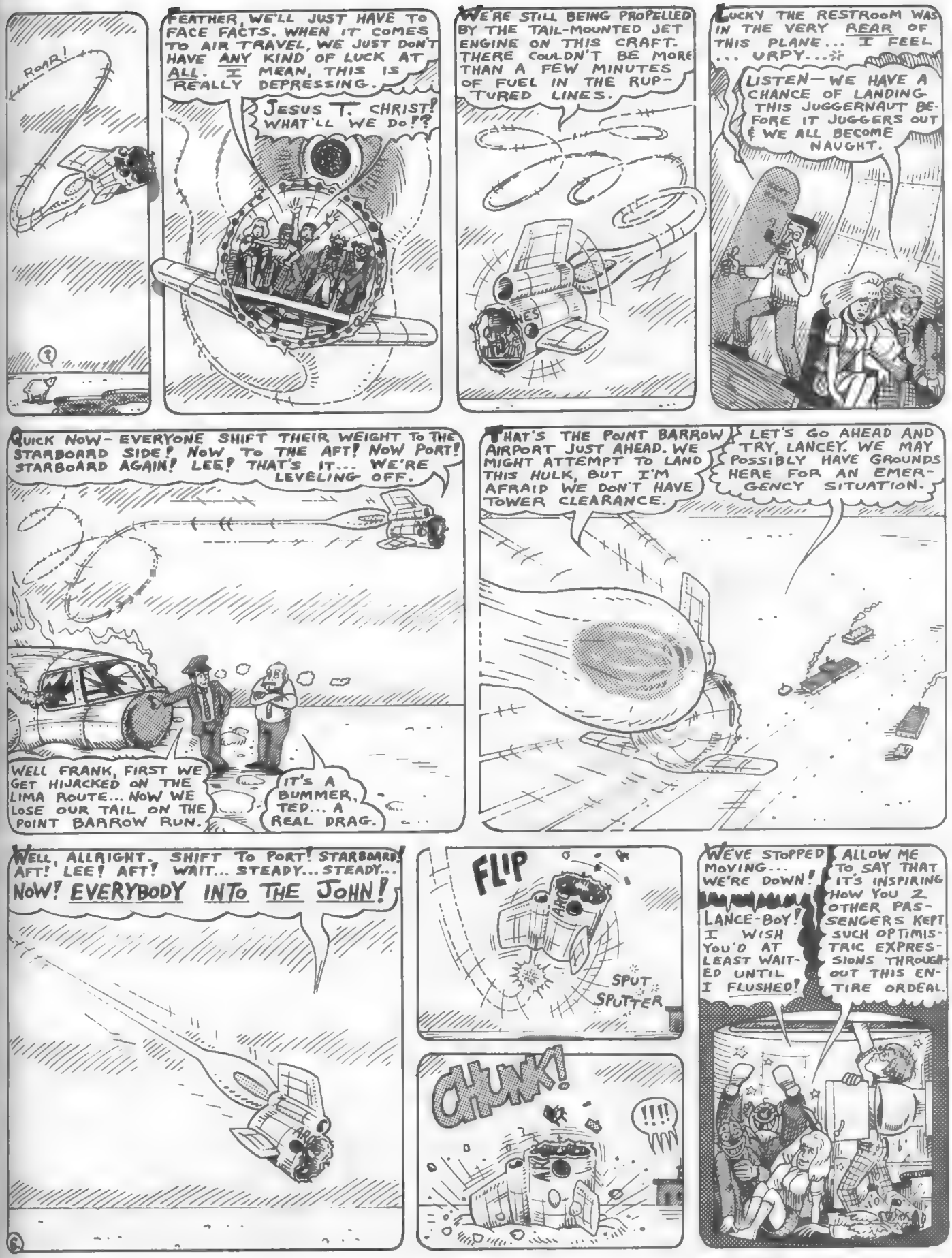
DOG BITES MAN

BUY!

SHORTLY THEREAFTER, AT THE CITY PLANE PLACE:
WE'LL TAKE THE NEXT FLIGHT TO POINT BARROW, ALASKA, THE NORTHERNMOST POINT ON THE NORTH AMERICAN MAINLAND- AND THE CUSTOMARY POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR THE NORTH POLE.
GATES 2-5
POINT BARROW, HERR ROATCH. VE MUST BOARD A PLANE TO DIS POINT BARROW. DID YOU PACK EVERYT'ING?!
YES, PROFESSOR... I BROUGHT MY CHECKBOOK.
GATES 2-5
ONCE WE LEAVE POINT BARROW, WE'LL HAVE A JOURNEY TO THE POLE OF APPROXIMATELY 1,350 MILES, AS THE CROW FLIES.
IT'S TOO COLD FOR CROWS TO FLY UP THERE, ISN'T IT LANCEY? THEY JUST WALK.
YESSIR, LANCE-BOY! YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! I'M NOT AFRAID OF NUTHIN' WE MIGHT MEET UP WITH. FROZEN WASTES! DESOLATE EMPTINESS! POLAR BEARS! I'LL TAKE 'EM ALL ON. YOU'LL BE IN SAFE HANDS TILL YOU GET TIRED OF POKING AROUND UP THERE & DECIDE TO HAVE ME BRING YOU HOME.
SLAP
I TAPPA KEG
BUT Y'KNOW... THERE'S SOMETHING I ALLUS' KINDA' WONDERED ABOUT: ALL THOSE POLAR BEARS TOOLIN' AROUND UP THERE ON THE ARCTIC ICE. THEY MUST FEEL THE FORCE OF NATURE AT LEAST ONCE A DAY LIKE THE BEST OF US. BUT IT'S SO COLD... WHAT HAPPENS TO ALL THAT FROZEN POOP? NYUH, NYUH...
THAT'S ACTUALLY AN INTERESTING QUERY, FREDDIE. AT AN AVERAGE TEMPERATURE OF MINUS 60° THERE CAN'T BE BACTERIAL DECOMPOSITION OF ORGANIC WASTES. AND ASIDE FROM POLAR BEARS, THERE ARE ARCTIC WALRUSES, FUR SEALS, HARP SEALS, RINGED SEALS, ESKIMO HUSKIES, ESKIMOS...
ETS
IR LINE
I TAPPA KEG
AND ALL THAT SUB-ZERO DEFECATING HAS BEEN GOING ON SINCE ABOUT THE PLEISTOCENE AGE, SAY 1 OR 2 MILLION YEARS. AND THEN THERE WERE GIANT WOOLY MAMMOTHS AND-
NO. NO! THE ARCTIC MUST BE ONE SOLID SHEET OF S#*T BY NOW! NO! I WON'T GO! YOU CAN'T MAKE ME! NO! I CAN'T STAND IT!
YAAAAAAAA
REALLY, FREDDIE, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT! MOTHER NATURE HAS WAYS OF... FEATHER, YOU CALM HIM DOWN WHILE I BUY THE PLANE TICKETS.
3
4.

YESSIR... I'D LIKE 3 TICKETS ON THE NEXT FLIGHT TO POINT BARROW, ALASKA; WE MIGHT AS WELL BE OPTIMISTRIC AND MAKE THEM ROUND-TRIP.
VERY GOOD SIR.
ZIS IS AS FAR AS YOU'LL EVER BE GOING, MY IMPERFECT MYOPIC MEDDLER.
THANK YOU... WE'LL TAKE OUR OWN HAND-LUGGAGE ON BOARD WITH US.
VERY GOOD SIR.....
splat.
phud.
YOUR TIME VILL COME, MYOPIC MEDDLER. IN ZA MEANTIME, ZAT AIRLINE MANAGER'S NOSE VAS SEVERAL SIZES TOO LARGE TO SUIT ME, ANYHOW.
BOARDING
QVICK, HERR ROATCH, DER CHECKBOOK. — KLERK, I BUY 2 TICKETS TO POINT BARROW... SCHNELL!
MY GOD, CAN'T YOU SEE THIS MAN'S JUST BEEN MURDERED!!!
VELL, I AM A REASONABLE MAN. I'LL ACCEPT SERVICE FROM DER ASSISTANT MANAGER. (ACH... SUCH BUREAUCRACY!)
LANCEY... THAT... THAT ISN'T A 1949 BOEING STRAT-O-CRUISER, IS IT?
THAT WOULD BODE ILL, WOULD IT NOT? NO, FEATHER, IT'S A NEW MINI-JET. I BELIEVE WE'RE ALLRIGHT.
ARCTIC
HERR ROATCH... HERE... PUT ON DIS DISGUISE LEST VE BE REKOGNIZED BY DIS MOTLEY KREW VE ARE FOLLOWING.
ARCTIC AIRLINES INCORPORATED
OUT RATE TICKETS AGAIN LANCEY? WE'RE IN THE REAR OF THE PLANE.
LANCE-BOY... THAT PAIR ACROSS THE AISLE LOOKS A BIT SUSPICIOUS IF Y'ASK ME.
RELAX, FREDDIE. ...HERE, LOOK AT THE LIST OF IN-FLIGHT MOVIES WE CAN SEE EN ROUTE.
REST ROOM
MY, WHAT AN ARRAY OF FEATURES! "THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY", "5 CAME BACK", FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX", "SKYJACKED", "MURDER ON FLIGHT 502", "TERROR AT 37,000 FEET", "AIRPORT '75", "THE DOOMSDAY FLIGHT", "THE CROWDED SKY"...
HOW WILL THEY FIND TIME TO SHOW ALL THOSE?
I DOUBT IF MANY PASSENGERS WILL COMPLAIN IF THEY DON'T MANAGE.
ROAR!
4


SOME HOURS LATER WE FIND OUR "AIR ARCTIC" JET ONLY 10 MILES OUTSIDE OF POINT BARROW...
WHILE NOT FAR BEHIND:
VE ARE OVER NORTHERN ALASKA NOW. I SHALL TAKE ACTION ...AND ZA EVIDENCE VILL BE LOST IN ZA REMOTE SNOWY VASTES BELOW.
WHICH MOVIE ARE WE WATCHING NOW, LANCEY?
HM? OH — I HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION. I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE A STOMACH FOR THESE PUERILE DISASTER MOVIES — THEY'RE SO PREPOSTEROUS!
MAKE BIG MONEY
FOOM!
MY WORD - WHAT A SCENE! ALL THOSE SPARKS AND FLAMES... THIS MUST BE AN IRWIN ALLEN PRODUCTION, WHATEVER IT IS.
AND GET A LOAD LOAD OF THAT SENSURROUND!
NOW YOU SEE FEATHER, THAT'S WHAT I MEAN ABOUT THE CONTRIVED OUTLANDISHNESS OF THESE SILLY FILMS. A JET-LINER FLYING WITH ITS TAIL-SECTION APPARENTLY BLOWN OFF. I MEAN REALLY!
LANCEY...
SUCH CHILDISHNESS! IN A SECOND WE'LL SWITCH TO A MELLOWDRAMATIC SCENE WITH THE PHONY PRIEST & THE HAS-BEEN TEEN IDOL THREATENING TO SIEZE CONTROL OF THE PLANE FROM THE PILOT-WITH-A-SHADY-PAST. AND I CAN'T SAY MUCH FOR THE SPECIAL EFFECTS EITHER.
LLLLAAANNCCEYY...
FEATHER... I'M BEGINNING TO GARNER YOUR MEANING. YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME THAT THIS ISN'T A MOVIE AND THAT ISN'T THE FRONT-SECTION OF SIMPLY ANY AIRLINER, AREN'T YOU? YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME THIS IS THE THEATER OF REALITY AND THE SPOTLIGHT'S ON US.
HEY! DOWN IN FRONT! THIS IS GETTING GOOD!
PROFESSOR!!! THE PLANE HAS BEEN BLOWN APART! WE'RE FLYING WILD IN THE TAIL-SECTION!
BUNDERSTR IF IT'S NOT ONE THING, IT'S ANOTHER.


ROAR!
FEATHER, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FACE FACTS. WHEN IT COMES TO AIR TRAVEL, WE JUST DON'T HAVE ANY KIND OF LUCK AT ALL. I MEAN, THIS IS REALLY DEPRESSING.
JESUS T. CHRIST! WHAT'LL WE DO!?
WE'RE STILL BEING PROPELLED BY THE TAIL-MOUNTED JET ENGINE ON THIS CRAFT. THERE COULDN'T BE MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES OF FUEL IN THE RUPTURED LINES.
LUCKY THE RESTROOM WAS IN THE VERY REAR OF THIS PLANE... I FEEL ... URPY...
LISTEN—WE HAVE A CHANCE OF LANDING THIS JUGGERNAUT BEFORE IT JUGGERS OUT & WE ALL BECOME NAUGHT.
QUICK NOW—EVERYONE SHIFT THEIR WEIGHT TO THE STARBOARD SIDE! NOW, TO THE AFT! NOW PORT! STARBOARD AGAIN! LEE! THAT'S IT... WE'RE LEVELING OFF.
WELL FRANK, FIRST WE GET HIJACKED ON THE LIMA ROUTE... NOW WE LOSE OUR TAIL ON THE POINT BARROW RUN.
IT'S A BUMMER, TED... A REAL DRAG.
THAT'S THE POINT BARROW AIRPORT JUST AHEAD. WE MIGHT ATTEMPT TO LAND THIS HULK, BUT I'M AFRAID WE DON'T HAVE TOWER CLEARANCE.
LET'S GO AHEAD AND TRY, LANCEY. WE MAY POSSIBLY HAVE GROUNDS HERE FOR AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.
WELL, ALLRIGHT. SHIFT TO PORT! STARBOARD! AFT! LEE! AFT! WAIT... STEADY... STEADY... NOW! EVERYBODY INTO THE JOHN!
FLIP
SPUT SPUTTER
CHUNK!
!!!!
WE'VE STOPPED MOVING... WE'RE DOWN!
LANCE-BOY! I WISH YOU'D AT LEAST WAITED UNTIL I FLUSHED!
ALLOW ME TO SAY THAT IT'S INSPIRING HOW YOU 2 OTHER PASSENGERS KEPT SUCH OPTIMISTIC EXPRESSIONS THROUGHOUT THIS ENTIRE ORDEAL.

SO HERE WE ARE. POINT BARROW, ALASKA... OUR LAST STOP BEFORE WE ENTER THE VAST UNKNOWN.
GET A WHIFF OF THAT ARCTIC AIR... AAAAHH. SO FULL OF... OF... ABSOLUTE NOTHINGNESS.
HERR ROATCH. VE HAFF T'INGS TO DO. DO YOU HAFF YOUR—
...MY CHECKBOOK? YES, YES...
OUR TIMING IS MOST FORTUITOUS. IT'S THE SUMMER SOLTICE HERE IN THE ARCTIC*. WE HAVE QUITE A PERIOD OF DAYLIGHT AHEAD IN WHICH TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION.
YES, WELL, LIKE I SAID LANCE-BOY. YOU HAVE NUTHIN TO FEAR WHILE I'M IN CHARGE — POLAR BEAR CHIN NOTWITHSTANDING! I CAN HANDLE ANYTHING AT ALL ...AS LONG AS I ...HEH, HEH... GET MY 8 HOURS AT NIGHT.
POK
*FOR THIS TO BE TRUE, WE MUST ASSUME THIS ADVENTURE IS TAKING PLACE IN JUNE, OTHERWISE THESE PANELS WOULD BE BLACK SQUARES.
WELL AS I WAS JUST IMPLYING, FREDDIE, THAT WILL BE A BIT DIFFERENT NOW. PERIODS OF DAYLIGHT HERE ARE 6 MONTHS LONG.
C'MON, LANCE-BOY! THAT'S SCIENCE-FICTION! HAR, HAR!
I'M AFRAID NOT.
WHAT'LL BECOME OF MY 8 HOURS! NO! NO!!! I CAN'T STAND IT! MAKE IT STOP! NO!!!
YAAAAAAAAAA
HERR ROATCH, VE MUST BUY SOME MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO DER POLE. BUT I DON'T SEEM TO SEE DER CITY UF POINT BARROW. NUT'ING BUT DESE SMUDGEPOTS.
OOF!
WHAT THE — WHAT WAS THAT? OH — IT'S DAYLIGHT... I MUSTVE OVERSLEPT. (YAWN.) SEEMS LIKE I JUST WENT TO BED LAST MONTH. HM.. MUST'VE SNOWED LAST NIGHT. —— WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU GENTS?
EH... VE ARE TRYING TO FIND VHERE VE KAN BUY A DOG TEAM & SLED.
P.i.t.
WELL BROTHER, YOU COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE! I HAPPEN TO BE THE ONLY NEW-AND-USED DOG SLED SALESMAN IN BEAUTIFUL POINT BARROW. NOBODY WALKS AWAY! NO OVERHEAD-JUST SKY! I'VE GOT ANYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES! COMPACT MODELS WITH 1½ CHIHUAHUAS. LUXURY MODELS WITH ALTERNATING AFGHANS AND POODLES AND CHROME RUNNERS. I'VE GOT SOME MODERN HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS THAT WON'T RESPOND TO "MUSH" — YOU HAFTA' SAY "CINNAMON FLAVORED CREAM OF WHEAT"!
HONEST INJUN
YAS, VELL, I VISH TO BUY ALL UF DEM! YOUR ENTIRE STOCK! DA VORKS!
MY ENTIRE ...YES SIR! I'LL GIVE YOU A PACKAGE DEAL ON THE ENTIRE MENAGERIE!

I VISH TO MAKE USE UF YOUR BEST, FASTEST TEAM UND SLED. THE REST YOU VILL HOLD FOR ME... HIDE DEM — TAKE DEM ALL DOWN INTO YOUR HUT FOR A DAY OR TWO.

A DAY OR TWO! SURE — BUT IT'S GONNA START GETTING A BIT RANK IN THERE COME MARCH AFTER NEXT.

BUT YOU'RE THE BOSS. I'LL GIVE YOU MY PRIZE-WINNING ULTRA-MODERN TEAM. IT ONLY RESPONDS TO "CARNATION INSTANT BREAKFAST". C'MON — THEY'RE DOWN THE STREET THERE.

IS GÜT. SCHNELL!

MEANWHILE:

OH. THAT'S BETTER. I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO A CHANCE TO MODEL SOME OF MR. BRUCE'S "ARCTIQUE COLLECTION".

NOW WE CAN SEE TO BUYING OURSELVES A PAIR OF DOG TEAMS AND ALL THE ACCOUTREMENTS.

WELL, LANCE-BOY, 'BOUT ALL READY TO HEAD BACK HOME YET?

I FELTA THI

EH... NOT QUITE YET, FREDDIE. LET ME SEE, WHERE SHALL WE BEGIN? I DON'T SEE A GREAT DEAL GOING ON IN POINT BARROW. POSSIBLY THIS NATIVE CAN DIRECT US TO A DEALER IN COMMERCIAL CANINE CONVEYANCE.

OH, LOOK LANCEY! WHAT RUSTIC LITTLE LOCAL HANDICRAFTS! AREN'T THEY SIMPLY PRECIOUS!

THOSE ARE RATHER CLEVER CARVINGS... BUT, SIR, IN WHAT MEDIUM DO YOU SCULPT? THAT DRY LIGNEOUS SUBSTANCE CAN'T BE WOOD — THERE'S NOTHING MORE THAN TUNDRA LICHENS FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES SOUTHWARD.

I FELTA THI

SOUVINEERS OF ALASKA

HUNGH. NOT WOOD. ONE'S CARVINGS ARE MADE FROM THE FRUIT OF THE POLAR BEAR... MUST GET RID OF EVIL JUNK SOMEHOW, BOSS.

FRUIT OF THE...

YAAAAA

AT ANY RATE, WE NEED TO PURCHASE SOME MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO THE POLE. WHO IS YOUR LOCAL PURVEYOR OF DOGS AND-SLASH-OR SLEDS?

HUNGH. BOSS IS OUT OF LUCK. ONE JUST HEARD THAT ONLY DOG DEALER IN NORTHERN ALASKA SOLD WHOLE STOCK TO CRAZY TOURIST. MAKE MUCH MONEY. IS RETIRING TO CABANA IN TROPICAL PARADISE OF BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA.

WELL, I SUPPOSE ALL THINGS ARE RELATIVE. ... BUT THIS IS MOST DISTRESSING! WHAT OTHER POSSIBLE MEANS OF TRAVEL CAN YOU SUGGEST?

HUNGH. ONE IS NOT KNOWING BOSS. SNOW-MOBILES IS ONLY OTHER THING, BUT MUST BRING THOSE WITH YOU WHEN COME...

SOUVINEERS OF ALASKA

...LIKE DID THAT OTHER CRAZY TOURIST WHO JUST LANDED IN SURPLUS JET-FIGHTER.

VRRRRUMMM!

NO DOG SLEDS. NO SNOW-MOBILES. NO MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO THE POLE. ALL SEEMS LOST.
HUNGH. HEY BOSS, MAYBE ONE HAS IDEA COULD HELP YOU OUT.
I'LL GIVE YOU AN IDEA, YOU LITTLE TWIT! STANDIN' THERE TRYIN' TO SELL PEOPLE FROZEN DOODOO! COME AROUND HERE AND I'M GONNA' STUFF THIS RACKET DOWN YOUR GIZZARD, YOU LITTLE TWERP!
HUNGH. SURE BOSS! ONE HAS BEEN STANDING HERE SINCE BEFORE LAST BLIZZARD.
HEY NOW, LISSSENNN! I'VE BEEN THINKIN' OF STARTING A COLLECTION OF STINKY STATUARY; THE ONLY REASON I'M NOT BUYING YOUR WHOLE DUNG DISPLAY IS THAT DOWN SOUTH THEY MIGHT TAKE ON A CERTAIN "AIR"... ...WOTHAHELL, I'LL BUY 'EM ANYWAY! WHY, SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE ESKIMOS!
HUNGH. BOSS, ALLOW ONE TO INTRODUCE SELF. ONE'S PARENTS NAME HIM USING PARTS OF THEIR NAMES. ONE'S FATHER WAS NA-NOOK. ONE'S MOTHER WAS LILISUMS...
BRACE YOURSELF FEATHER. SOMETHING TELLS ME THIS IS GOING TO BE A DOOZY.
ONE'S NAME IS LIL-SNOOKUMS.
YOU WERE RIGHT, LANCEY.
WINCE.
BUT TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE... EH... LIL-SNOOKUMS. WE SEEM TO BE IN CONTENTION WITH OTHERS IN THIS QUEST. WHAT WAS YOUR IDEA ON ATTAINING THE NORTH POLE?
HUNGH. ONE HAS ITEM BELOW IN HUT. BOUGHT FROM DEFAULTING CARNIVAL OWNER IN '62.
HUNGH. BOSS GOT MATCH?
I'M AFRAID NOT...
HUNGH. WILL USE OWN.
FOOM
GREAT HONK! NOW WHAT?!
LANCEY! WE'VE BEEN STANDING ON A POLAR BEAR?
HELP! HELP!
ZOUNDS! I'M NONPLUSSED!
LANCEY! IT'S ANOTHER VOLCANO!!
YAAAA
9

BEEN
OLLEC-
THE
YING
Y IS
MIGHT
R"...
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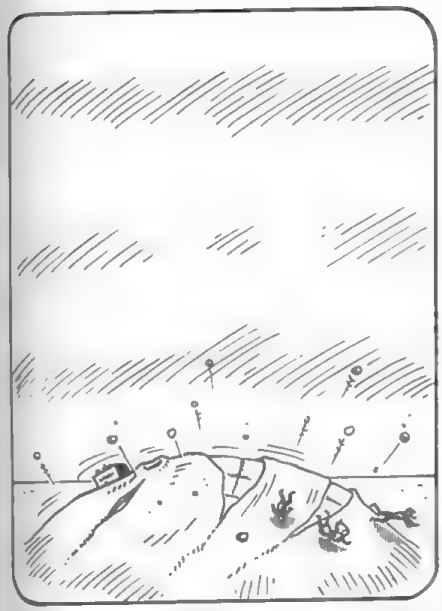
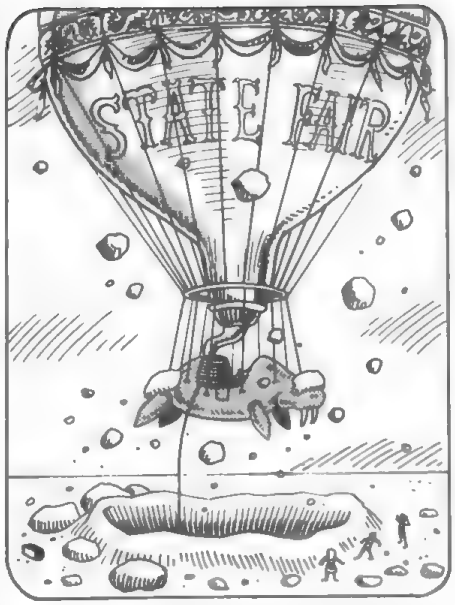
9.

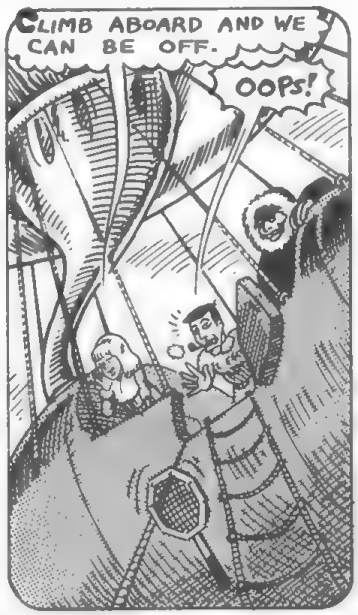


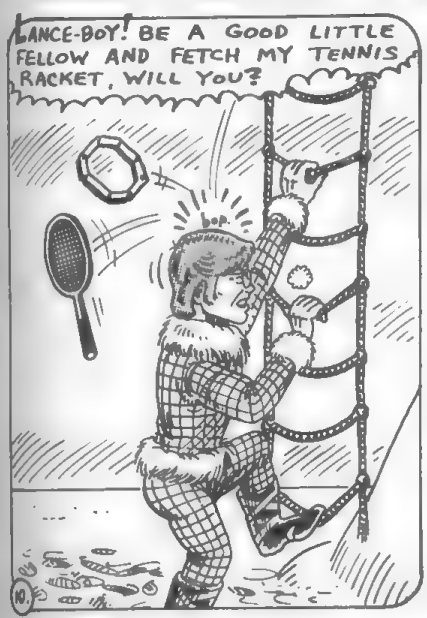
JUNEAU


STATE FAIR

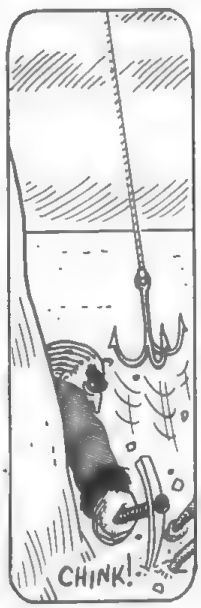
HUNGH. YES, BOSS, THIS OLD CARN! BALLOON WILL GET YOU WHERE YOU WANT GO. NO CROSSING ICE PACK. GO PLENTY QUICK. EASY STUFF.
LIL-SNOOKUMS, THIS IS OUTSTANDING! WHAT BETTER MEANS OF TRAVEL OVER THE ARCTIC THAN A HOT AIR BALLOON! LET'S GATHER TOGETHER OUR SUPPLIES!

SHORTLY:
THAT'S EVERY-THING FROM CORNFLAKES TO CLEAN UNDERWEAR, LANCEY.
JUNEAU
STATE
OKAY, FEATHER.

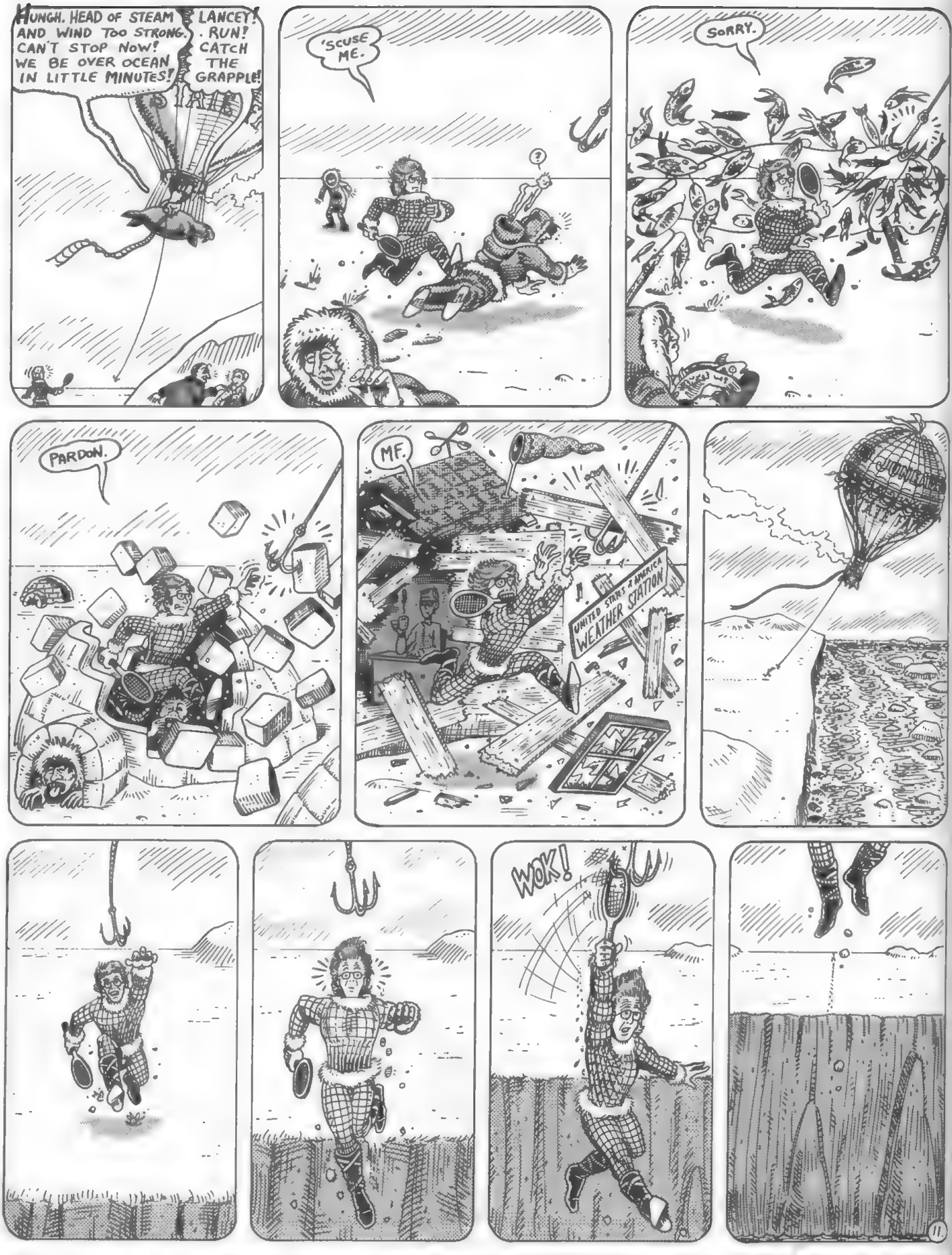

CLIMB ABOARD AND WE CAN BE OFF.
OOPS!


LANCE-BOY! BE A GOOD LITTLE FELLOW AND FETCH MY TENNIS RACKET, WILL YOU?
BOP.
W.

ALLRIGHT, FREDDIE, ALLRIGHT.

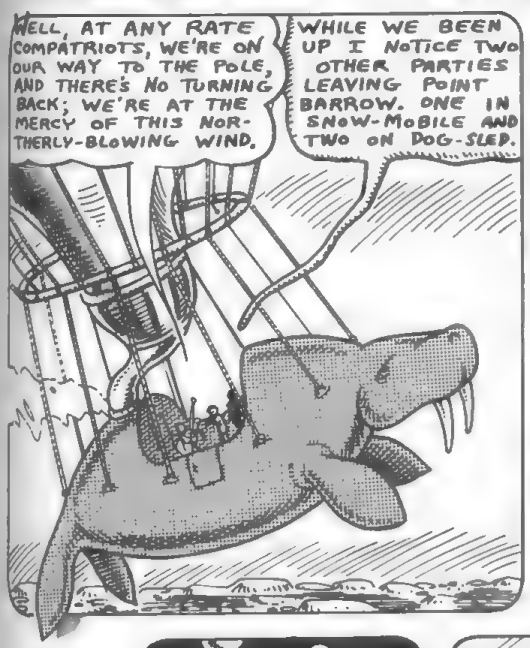

CHINK!

NOW WE CAN — SAY! WAIT JUST ONE BLEEDING MINUTE THERE!
ZIP

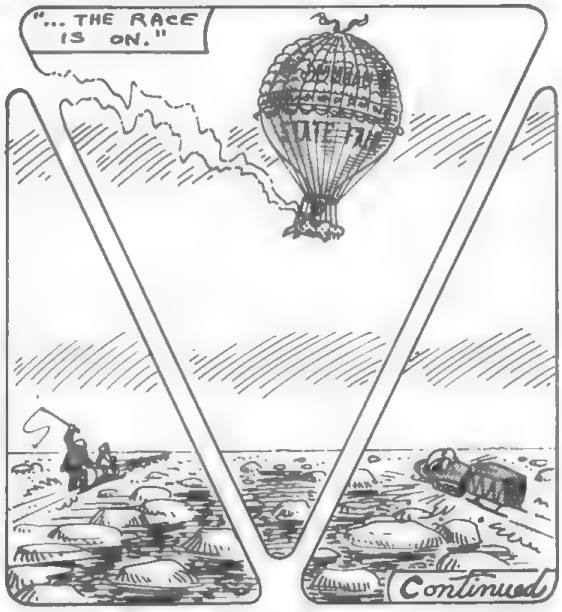

HUNGH. HEAD OF STEAM AND WIND TOO STRONG. CAN'T STOP NOW! WE BE OVER OCEAN IN LITTLE MINUTES!
LANCEY! . RUN! CATCH THE GRAPPLE!
'SCUSE ME.
?
SORRY.
PARDON.
MF.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WEATHER STATION
WOK!
11.

YOU O.K. NOW BOSS.
WHY YOU @*#%! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY TENNIS RACKET! THAT WAS A GIFT FROM A CERTAIN YOUNG THING AT MY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION BASH.
I HADN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO USE IT YET!

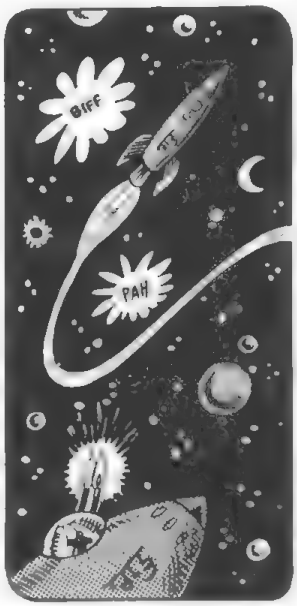
I APOLOGIZE ABOUT YOUR RACKET, FREDDIE, BUT IT WAS EITHER IT OR ME.
I REALIZE THAT!
GOOD THING YOU NOT GO IN WATER. THAT WHAT MAKE THIS DANGEROUS WAY TO TRAVEL. IF WE GO INTO WATER WE ALL FREEZE DEAD IN 60 SECONDS.


WELL, AT ANY RATE COMPATRIOTS, WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO THE POLE, AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK; WE'RE AT THE MERCY OF THIS NORTHERLY-BLOWING WIND.
WHILE WE BEEN UP I NOTICE TWO OTHER PARTIES LEAVING POINT BARROW. ONE IN SNOW-MOBILE AND TWO ON DOG-SLED.

YES, IT HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY EVIDENT THAT THERE ARE OTHERS ON THIS QUEST WITH SOMEWHAT LESS ALTRUISTIC PLANS FOR THE LOST ART TREASURES THAN HAVE WE. MY FRIENDS, I'M AFRAID THAT...



AND NOW FOR SOME EXCITING SCENES FROM EPISODE #130!



by Don Rosa

POINT/ COUNTER POINT

In recent times, the emphasis on violence, crime, and sex in comic books has been on a sharp increase. Many titles in the sword and sorcery classification have characters revolving about constant violence, with rewards for a bloody battle being a healthy, spiteful female. Although in no way in the same scope as comics of the '50's, the allusion to Dr. Fredric Wertham and his book Seduction of the Innocent in explaining the present situation is fast becoming a common one. Will comics once again make headlines as the public re-enacts the comic book destruction of the '50's? With this question in mind, our column begins its first entry.

POINT by Doug Haines

During the past few years, violence and sex in comic books has once again been on the upswing. The comic industry, faced with disasterous sales and ever increasing manufacturing costs, is once again forgetting the moral code in turn for additional revenue. Titles such as DEATHLOK incorporate violence as a mainstay in their stories, having their characters revolving about it, as also do most of the Sword and Sorcery type comics. In fact, it is hard to find a comic today that doesn't dwell somewhat in crime, violence and sex, or sexual overtones. In view of this, many are again going over the book Seduction of the Innocent, wondering if, once more, we may be caught up in another comic book moral upheavel, such as the one that Dr. Fredric Wertham produced in the early '50's, revealing to the public the truth over the industry's emphasis on crime, violence, and sex as a selling point. This fear, produced by this new public awareness, worries many in the industry, and fandom alike. These people are afraid of the potential great loss of artistic and writing ability, as what occured in the '50's, especially in the EC line of comics and has taken twenty years to return. They don't want it to occur once more.

I, for one, am among a minority in comic fandom who back Dr. Wertham's concern over horror, crime, and love comics of the late '40's and early '50's. Although I wasn't around back then, I have studied extensively the book Seduction of the Innocent, and the actual comics mentioned, finding the emphasis on blood, lust, and the notion that 'crime pays' grotesque and sickening for a book intended for readers from age 5-18. I agree with Dr. Wertham that children can be easily influenced by what is thrust under them. Being only 16 myself, I am not beyond the age where I can remember how horror movies would give me nightmares, or how some perverse or grotesque scene tends to stay with you. Scaring my sister after a murder movie was nothing uncommon, as we'd both be edgy, afraid of what would be around the corner, or at the top of the stairs. I can picture how I would have been affected, were I a child of the early '50's. When I was very young, I would never go to sleep with a horror book at my side; I was afraid of its contents coming out at night. I can just envision what having graphic horror stories would have been like, instead of just words. I believe that the time has come for fandom to accept this fact, that of the easily persuasive mind of the young reader, and also the necessity of the comic industry to clean up their books, before the public starts doing it for them.

On a happier note though, all in comic fandom should be very grateful for Dr. Wertham and his book. Were it not for him, where would we all be? If horror and crime comics had not been forced off the stands, with them continuing to maintain a huge profit margin, would the superhero comic ever have been revived? Would there be the FANTASTIC FOUR, SPIDER-MAN, THOR, THE HULK, or the countless hundreds of other characters and titles originated in the super hero revival? Would even Superman himself still be around? I think that it would have been many years before the horror trend would have run its course, while, in the meantime, leaving the comic collector as we are known today, probably not in existence. Because of this, and my other points, I think that Dr. Wertham should be given the respect due to a man who didn't give up against huge opposing odds, for doing what he considered best.

Could there be another comic-moral upheavel? I do not think that there will ever again be such a comic hunt, simply because society is loosening its morals at the same time that the comic industry is forgetting theirs, and so long as they keep in pace, few will complain. Also, today's comics are so short, and the size so greatly reduced, that what even may be morally objectional is too hard to see to get upset about. And with the price still climbing, only older collectors will be able to afford large quantities to read, as most kids are broke half the time anyway.

So worry not comic industry, but be concerned parents what with all the problems in this world today for a growing child, we don't need comics to worry us once again.

COUNTER POINT by John Baglem

It is an honor to work with my reverted collegue on this first column, but on many of his "facts", he is in fact wrong. His notion that the industry has been looking toward violence as a selling point is completely mistaken. The comic industry has been in its present slump since the late '60's, with no end in sight. One title, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, has been a hit and large seller, but not because of its violence. The atmosphere that the character roams within is violent, which is true to life at date, but sorcery more than sword are what comprise the stories and produce the main selling point. Titles such as DEATHLOK, which are comprised almost solely of sheer violence, have low sales. The comic's interesting point is not when cyborg wastes bum, but the analysis of a half man, half machine, and the complexities forthwith. Violence, sex, crime--all are not the main selling point, the basis of a story, but instead they represent life as it is, not lollipops and Shirley Temple.

Children should be allowed to be children. They

should be allowed to live in a fantasy world. And so comics such as the Gold Key series are devoted to these young readers in their whimsical world. But these readers comprise but a small portion of comic book followers. With the renewed respectability of the comic book, many older readers have returned to the field, readers who want more sophisticated stories, more sophisticated art. Readers who are beyond Dopey, Pluto and the Jetsons. This returning group, these new followers, they are fast becoming the majority of comic book readers. Is the comic industry to avoid them, to forget this returning clan and go back to super hero meets criminal, super hero outwits criminal, super hero flies off into sunset? No. No matter what Julius Schwartz says, there is a new breed of reader, and this reader just could be the industry's salvation.

The reference Mr. Haines directs us to of his childhood years of an easily persuasive mind are fine for him. Maybe comic books are too much for his mind, and he shouldn't read them. But his days of youth are in no way related to mine, as mine are in no way related to thousands of others. Different people result in different upbringings, and his childhood is in no way conclusive as a test case for others. In my youth, a book was a book, nothing more, nothing less. I had no fear of monsters crawling out and murdering me in my sleep. But because of this, I cannot say that all children are numb to mystical fears. It all counts on the child, and no definite line can be drawn.

Mr. Haines' reference to Dr. Wertham as being the key to the superhero revival is far from the truth. Sales of superhero comics such as SUPERMAN, WONDER WOMAN, CAPTAIN MARVEL and many many more were considerably larger before the publication of Seduction of the Innocent than after, or the miniscule level at present. True, the Marvel line of titles might not be as we know them today, but who can forsee what would have happened? Mr. Lee's takeover of Atlas was inevitable, and with him came the ideas for Marvel's successful line. And without that line, comic fandom might still have arisen from the dust, and become the great organization that it is today. It is impossible to say that either this or that would have happened. Only fate holds the key to the answer.

Will we experience another comic crusade reminiscent of the '50's? First we must understand human nature for an answer. Man is famous for his quick action, without any logic put in, only emotion. Such has been the theme for many a comic book. But, in those past 20 years, maybe man has matured to the point of thinking before acting. For unless he has, comics will end up being written in caves instead of on paper. Our minds hold the key to the answer. Ours is only to choose which door to unlock.

THIS IS WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY NOT SUBSCRIBING TO THE EXCITING NEW ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR

This issue of the RBCC which you're reading is just an example of what you can have every six weeks, without fail, should you decide to subscribe (if you haven't already). This RAY BRADBURY issue is just an example of the very special issues we are capable of putting together, of the care and planning that goes into each and every issue of the RBCC. As regular features, each issue presents Don Rosa's INFORMATION CENTER (which will be just text so that Don can devote his artistic abilities to his comic strip each issue, THE PERTWILLABY PAPERS). POINT/COUNTER POINT, which debuts on the opposite page, will also be a regular feature which will explore issues of importance to comic fandom. R.C. Harvey's COMICOPIA is another regular comics feature, this column discussing various subjects dealing directly with comic art involving both the theory and history. The very popular review column CRITIQUE is another regular feature which reviews all sorts of publications and items relating to the fields of comics, science fiction and films. THE NOVA S.F. REVIEW is our new review column strictly devoted to reviewing science fiction books, anthologies, etc, which are currently available on the newsstands. THE E.C. ARTIST COLLECTOR covers the non-E.C. work of the many popular artists on the old E.C. staff. FILMS FANTASTIQUE will return from its long absence and not only cover such films as THE TIME MACHINE, JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS and next issue SILENT RUNNING, but it will also present new artwork with the articles illustrating scenes and characters from the films (these often being done by Ralph Fowler who will be doing next issue's SILENT RUNNING illustrations, and these are indeed fine original drawings, not photo swipes passed off as art!). This issue of RBCC gives you a fine cross section of our staff of regular artists which includes STEVE FABIAN, TOM SUTTON, MIKE ZECK, RON WILBER, DON ROSA, KERRY GAMMILL and more! These artists will each be individually profiled in another new feature beginning next issue. Also next issue will be a special feature article on Adam Strange and as a tie-in the front and back covers next issue will be super science fiction illustrations of Adam Strange by Mike Zeck! Many other covers by Mike Zeck have already been done for future issues featuring The Destroyer, Blue Beetle and Thor! All this and more awaits you in coming issues of the RBCC. Don't delay, subscribe today! (SEE PAGE 2 FOR INFORMATION).

KEYHOLE, installment number 40.
Written by Gary Brown, 9423 SW 76th Street, Apt. W-11, Miami, Florida 33173.
Intended for the 131st issue of Rocket's Blast-Comicollector.
Logo art by Doug Potter.

(*)

CHARLTON CAPERS It appears as though the Charlton line of comic books has come to a sudden, if not expected, end. In September, the company known as Charlton Publications, Inc. announced that they will give up the comic book publishing business. Although no one seemed surprised at the move, the final corporate decision was handled very quietly, letting no indication of the eventual result to leak out.

Several weeks previous to the final decision, thirteen title cancellations were announced by editor George Wildman. Several remaining titles were decreased in frequency and four "unpublished" books were killed before they saw a first issue.

Charlton has always been a 'back street cousin' to the four or five big-time publishers, spending most of their effort on romance, western, science fiction and horror titles. Although they managed to do their own printing at Derby, Conn., the result was mostly inferior in quality. And while their staff of artists and writers hasn't always been top-notch, over the years they have had their share of well-known artists working for them. The likes of Al Williamson, Alex Toth, Dick Giordano, Gray Morrow, Neal Adams, Steve Ditko, Tom Sutton, John Severin, Joe Staton, and Don Newton were just some of the illustrators who at one time toiled for Charlton.

But while Charlton never did manage to squeeze into the top-sellers for any great length of time, they have had their moments of glory and interest to the comic book field. Steve Ditko's Captain Atom character had two successful and popular runs during the 1960's; Dick Giordano's ambitious and careful editing and guidance produced a line of fan appreciated super-heroes and characters; the entire "ghost/horror" trend in the early 1970's was set off by the sudden success of Charlton's Ghostly Tales; Steve Ditko once again scored with his intrique versions of both the Blue Beetle and The Question; Charlton made head-way in the television adaptation market by signing to do comics on Space:1999, Six Million Dollar Man, Emergency, and the Hanna-Barbera animation group of characters.

Two of the most memorable bits of comic book history were also born at the Charlton offices. Denny O'Neil and Pat Boyette teaming up on the brillant version of "The Children of Doom." A comic book that combined a unique story line with inventive and experimental graphics -- one that should be on every collector's shelf.

Second is the marvelous adaptation of the Lord of the Jungle in Jungle Tales of Tarzan by Joe Gill and Sam Glanzman. Although it was an illegal use of the ERB character, and publication of the book was stopped by the ERB estate, those in control in Tarzana were privately impressed with the handling of the ape man. In fact, the expressed a desire to Gold Key (who was then publishing the Tarzan and Korak comic books) that they consider a similar adaptation of the Character.

Because of the rather minor league status in the Charlton comic line, the company was often used as a springboard for aspiring writers and artists. It was a chance to develop and improve their art, while getting their feet wet in the industry.

Even though it was business as usual in the Charlton offices up through the month of August of this year, there were numerous complaints by employes that the line was not being properly cared for. When the contracts for the Six Million Dollar Man and Emergency adaptations were signed, a representative for Universal Studios was assigned to oversee the production of the books and black and white

magazines. Although no stills or reference work was provided, the representative was rarely satisfied with the drawing or the writing. He demanded correction after correction without being refused by the publishers because they did not want to risk losing the seemingly valuable property rights. The final result was the resignation of several of the artists involved.

In the closing weeks, although stories were assigned and bills were paid, it was difficult for some long-time artists to even get in editor Wildman's office to discuss potential ideas. While they were obviously disappointed at this type of reaction, it was clear that the closing of the comic book operations had been in the wind for a number of weeks before anyone was told of it.

The final twist to the tale comes just hours prior to the writing of this report. It seems that there may be some problem in getting out of the contracts Charlton has with Hanna-Barbera, and the company may even yet be forced to fulfill their contract obligations in this respect. Rumors have it that they are looking to sell the rights to such characters as E-Man, Blue Beetle, Captain Atom and Peacemaker to an interested publisher, but the Hanna-Barbera snag might delay that move. Considering the current value in the old Quality characters DC has reaped, it might be wise for either DC or Marvel to invest in them at this time. Even if the majority of the ideas end up in a legal closet for a few years, the investment might eventually pay off.

While it is sad to see the Charlton line of comics go under, it will do some good in giving added space to the news racks where the comics are displayed. Although most areas are saturated with Marvel, DC and Archie titles, it might give added room and consideration to the Harvey and Gold Key lines.

DC CHANGES One by one the awaited changes at DC Comics Inc. (the new name for the organization, wiping out the National Periodicals Publications, Inc. moniker) have been initiated. A new emblem has been designed and, in the words of a fan who has seen it, it is "one of the slickest looking designs ever to grace the cover of a comic book." The entire editor set-up has been revived,as has the chain of command in the New York offices.

One of the boldest moves comes in the packaging angle of the industry. Jenette Kahn and Sol Harrison have announced the creation of the 50¢ and $1.00 comic book. The 50¢ book will be 48-pages and all new material. The $1.00 comic will contain 80-pages and also have all new stuff. The first 50¢ book will be Justice League of America #139 and the four titles going up to $1.00 will be House of Mystery, Superman Family, World's Finest and G.I. Combat. Of course, it remains to be seen how long these $1.00 comics will contain all new material. In fact, it'll be interesting to see how long the remain -- period.

The main responsibility in the success or failure of the $1.00 books will fall on the shoulders of the dealers. If they will allow the higher priced books to remain on the stands for the duration -- and they will assist in giving the obviously larger profit item display space, it just may work. If the $1.00 comics succeed. If they do well enough in sales to merit more titles changing format, we may see all comics going this route before the end of the decade. Since the books will supposedly carry all original material, they will not only have to be profitable to the dealers and distributors, but the sales figures will have to merit continuation.

No doubt about it, kids have $1 bills to spend on comic books -- the question is, how many will they let go of each week?

NEWSPAPER STRIPS Several new and several planned newspaper strips have begun the possible start of a new trend in the business. As most of you now know, Stan Lee has his hand in two of these projects. The first being a soap opera/satire called "The Virtue of Vera Valiant" for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate. "Vera" is a direct spoof (or copy) of the "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" television program. Vera is a well-meaning, stumbling young girl who gets tossed into ridiculous situations time after time. Her brother tried to "gas" himself in the family's electric stove and her boyfriend's wife has had sleeping sickness for over 14 years (she snores too). Art is handled by Frank Springer, yet the first week has all the indications that John Buscema either pencilled the strip or created the visual characterizations. There will be a Sunday page and the strip debuted October 11th.

Lee and John Romita will also be working on the adventure Spider-Man strip for the Tribune Syndicate, to begin soon. Word is also out that Ron Goulart is developing a science fiction strip idea for NEA, with Gil Kane doing the artwork.

SUTTON